AN HELP and EXHORTATION TO Worthy Communicating.

Mar. 3.10.

OR, A

TREATISE

Describing the

Meaning, Worthy Reception, Duty, and Benefits

OF THE

HOLY SACRAMENT.

AND

Answering the *Doubts of Conscience*, and *other Reasons*, which most generally detain Men from It.

Together with

SUITABLE DEVOTIONS

ADDED.

By *John Kettlewell*, Vicar of *Coles-hill* in *Warwick-shire*.

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BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

TO THE

Right Honourable

SIMON Lord *DIGBY*,

BARON OF

GEASHILL.

MY LORD,

THE *Holy Eucharist* is a Rite of the greatest Honour and Endearment that ever God vouchsafed to Men, and the most Sublime

and Bliſsful Inſtance of our Communion with him. For therein he calls us to his own *Table*, not to attend as *Servants*, but to Feaſt with him as his *Friends:* He treats us with the moſt Magnificent Fare, preſenting That to us for our Food, which one would think were not to be *eaten*, but *adored*, even the moſt Sacred *Body* and *Blood* of his own *Son*; in which he conveys to us all the Benefits of our Redemption. And being thus apt to excite in us the higheſt Devotion, and to enrich us with the greateſt Fulneſs of Grace and Bleſſing, one would expect it ſhould be had in Reverence,

verence, and moſt Thankfull Received by every Chriſtian.

But yet in our Days what part of Religion doth ſo generally ſuffer, or is ſo univerſally neglected among Men? For the greateſt Numbers have either little or no Reverence at all for it, or too much, which makes them afraid of it; they Neglect it thro' Careleſneſs and Cauſeleſs Scruples, or Prophane it by Unworthy and Diſreſpectful Uſage: So that among all the Profeſſors of Chriſtianity, few pay that Honour to their Lord, or ſecure that Benefit to themſelves by Receiving, which

he intended All ſhould do.

This, *My Lord*, is the Grief and Complaint of all, who have any juſt Honour for their Deareſt Saviour, and this Venerable Ordinance; or any generous Compaſſion for the Souls of others. And that, by the Grace of God, I may help ſomething to redreſs it, I have endeavoured to deſcribe a *Worthy Communicating*, and to ſet out both the Duty and Advantages of it in this Treatiſe, that thereby I may recommend it to the Choice of all who are Wiſe, and to the Conſciences of all that are Religious. In the Manage-

nagement whereof, I have ſhunn'd all fruitleſs Diſputes, and nice Speculations, ſeeking onely to get it Authority among the Looſe, and Reverence with the Careleſs, and to reconcile it to the Scrupulous, and to make the Duty as Clear, Eaſie, and Uſeful as I can to all. Particularly, I have deſigned all along to make it not onely an Honourable Remembrance of our Dear Lord, but a moſt Solemn and Strict Engagement to a Good Life in all that uſe it; for then I am ſure they will be infinitely Happy in it.

And this Diſcourſe, *My No-*

ble Lord, I here humbly offer to Your Lordſhip, deſiring it may ſtand as a Publick Teſtimony of the great Honour and Affection I have for thoſe Excellencies that ſhine ſo clear in You. God has endow'd Your Great Mind with a ſtrong Love and a ſteady Choice of Virtue; and, what I have beheld with Pleaſure, with a Generous, and, as there is Place for it, an Active Compaſſion for thoſe that want it. You have the True Wiſdom, upon Deliberate and Well-ſtudied Reaſons, to be Religious; and the Courage, in this Audacious Age, when Irreligion is ſet up for the onely Creditable

Creditable Dreſs, to own it, and ſtudy to be thought ſo. For 'tis Your Lordſhips Honour to think that nothing can truly make You Greater, than to be an humble Worſhipper, and Faithful Servant of Your Holy Saviour. This Noble Piety and Zeal for Goodneſs, will endear You, *My Lord*, to Almighty God, and to all Good Men. And if by theſe Papers I may in any wiſe contribute to them, I ſhall think my ſelf happy in having ſerv'd to ſet on the Virtuous Growth of One whom I hope God has ſet out in a Time that ſo infinitely needs it, for an Illuſtrious Example,

ample, that may give both Ornament and Support to Religion.

But beſides this, *My Lord*, I have another End in this Dedication; and that is, That theſe Sheets may remain a Laſting Monument of my Gratitude for the Endearing Favours I have received from Your Noble Hand. They were Compoſed for the Benefit of a Place where I am now fixed, and whereto I was deſign'd by Your great Generoſity and Nobleneſs, when I thought of nothing leſs. For ſo truly Publick was Your Lordſhips Spirit in the Filling

ling of that Church, that You pitch'd upon a Perſon whoſe Face You had never known, and who never knew of it, only becauſe You believed he would make it his Care to promote Religion, and to Benefit thoſe Souls which You had to commit to him. And this, *My Lord*, I humbly beg Your Lordſhips Leave to mention, not for Your own, but for the Publicks ſake. For in this degenerate Age, when either Filthy Lucre, or at leaſt ſome other mean and ſordid End, have made a Merchandiſe, and bred Corruption even in the moſt *Sacred Truſts*, I think the World has need of *ſuch Examples.*

I have nothing more to add, but to beg of Almighty God, That he who brings about the Nobleſt Ends by the Weakeſt and moſt Unlikely Inſtruments, would make this Book effectual to his own Honour and Service; and alſo bleſs Your Lordſhip with a Continuance and Encreaſe of all Virtuous Excellencies, Honour, and Happineſs in this World, till at laſt he ſhall take You to ſhine in his own Immortal Glory in the World to come. This is the moſt hearty Prayer of him, who very much for Your Favours, but more for the true Affecti-

on

on and Eſteem You have for the God and Saviour he ſerves, is in all ſincerity,

My Honoured Lord,

Your Lordſhips

moſt Affectionate

obliged Chaplain,

and humble Servant,

From Your Lordſhips Houſe near Coles-hill, Jun. 27. 83.

John Kettlewell.

THE CONTENTS.

PART I.

The meaning of Feasting in the Sacrament.

CHAP. I.

Of the meaning of our eating and drinking in the Sacrament.

THree ends of Feasting in the Lords Supper. 1 *End is in Remembrance and Commemoration of our Saviour Christ, and of his dying for us. To remember him is not barely to call to mind that once there was such a Person, but to think of his particular Quality and Relation to us, which are worth remembring, as of his being our most*

most Faithful Teacher, our most Gracious Governour, our most intire Friend, and noble Benefactor. These things usually commemorated by Festivals. 2 End is in confirmation of the New Covenant which his Death purchased for us. An account of the New Covenant. Christs Death purchased it: It is ratified in the Holy Sacrament, which is shewn from the same thing being done in Baptisme, Circumcision, and the Passover which answered to it: more particularly. 1. From the Words of Institution, wherein the Cup is call'd the New Covenant, and we are bid to drink of it, which was a Covenant-Rite; and the Bread Christs Body, to the same intent the Paschal Lamb was, which was a Federal Conveyance of it. 2. From its being a Feast or Sacrifice, for Sacrifice is one way of Covenanting with God, and by Feasting on it we partake of it. 3. From its conveying the particular Blessings of the New Covenant, which otherwise than by Federal Promises, or Performances are not to be had. 3 End is in Ratification of a League of Love and Friendship with those Brethren that Communicate with us, and with all others. This Chapter summ'd up. Page 5.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the Worthineſs of Communicating in the Sacrament.

To Communicate Worthily, is to do it with ſuch Tempers and Behaviours as are worthy of it, and becoming Things which are meant by it. The First *End was to remember Chriſt, both,* firſt, *As our Lord and Maſter, which calls for Honour and Reverence in our ſelves, and a care to maintain his Honour among others. For mindfulneſs of his Commands, and Reſolutions of Obedience.* 2. *As our moſt kind Friend and Benefactor, which calls for Love and an hearty Affection for him. For Joy and Gladneſs in what we receive from him. For Thankfulneſs for all his Kindneſſes, particularly in Dying for us. And as this Death was a Sacrifice for our Sins, the Remembrance of it calls for a deep ſenſe of our own unworthineſs. An utter Abhorrence of our Sins, which cauſed his Sufferings. A Reſignation of our ſelves to his Uſe, as thereby we are become his own Purchaſe. The* Second *End was to confirm the New Covenant with God which his Blood procured. This calls for Sincerity and Faithfulneſs. A* Third *End*

was

was to confirm a League of Love and Friendſhip with all Chriſtians. This calls for Peace and Charity to all Perſons, and particularly for Alms to the Neceſſitous. A Summary Repetition of theſe Qualifications. A Belief of theſe Things, which carries us on to theſe Tempers and Performances, is the Faith that makes us Worthy Communicants. page 48

CHAP. III.

A further Account of this Worthineſs.

Theſe recited Tempers are all neceſſary in the Perſon Communicating, but not at all neceſſary to be expreſly exerciſed in the Time of Communion. A Direction in which it may be fit to lay out our Devotion at that time. All theſe are provided for in the Churches Prayers, ſo that we may exerciſe them worthily if we go along devoutly at all the Parts of the Communion Service. page 87

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Worthy Receiving not extraordinary difficult, and of unworthineſs to Communicate.

To ſilence the Complaint of extraordinary difficulty in coming worthily to this Sacrament, three things noted. 1. *All the particulars of worthy Receiving, are neceſſary parts of Duty, and of a good Man; ſo that no more is required to fit us for receiving, than is required to fit us to dye, or to go to Heaven.* 2. *They are all neceſſary Qualifications of an acceptable Prayer, Vow, or Thanksgiving; ſo that no more is required to it, than to a worthy diſcharge of all other Acts of Religion.* 3. *However they may be commended, yet they are not neceſſarily required in more intenſe, and tranſporting degrees in it, than in other inſtances of Devotion. The only unworthineſs, which can put us by this Ordinance, is Impenitence: if Repentance will go down with any man, nothing elſe need ſtick with him. This Point of Worthy Communicating ſumm'd up.* pag. 100

The Contents.

PART II.

CHAP. I.

Of the Duty of Communicating.

To Communicate is a Duty incumbent on us, as appears, 1. *From the obliging import of the Command about it. This Command of Christ shewn, and several Notes added, which really recommend and enforce it,* viz. *It is such an Instance, as best shews our peculiar Reverence and Love to him; the whole yoke of* Jewish *Ceremonies is taken away, and only it, and Baptism, two cheap and easie Rites, imposed in stead of them; it was his last Command, he gave it the Night before he suffered; in* St. Paul's *Commission to Preach the Gospel, it was particularly specified; without greatest Danger to our selves it cannot be neglected, as appears from our Saviours Words,* Joh. 6. 53. *which are shewn to speak of it; and from the Danger of Neglecting the* Jewish *Passover, which answered to it.* 2. *From the obliging Nature of those things which are meant by it,* viz. *Because therein we publickly own Christ and his Religion, and solemnly remember*

member him, and confirm the New Covenant with God, and a League of Friendſhip with our Brethren, and are vouchſafed the higheſt Honour, and receive Tokens of greateſt Love, and enjoyment of preſent Graces, and pledges of future Glory from him: all which no Good man ought, and no Ingenuous man will decline, when he is call'd to them. This Duty obliges thoſe only who are of Age for it, and them too only at ſuch times as they have an Opportunity and a fit Occaſion offered. An Objection againſt its being a Duty, from 1 Cor. 11. 25, *anſwered. The Neglect of it is a great Sin. This God may excuſe in thoſe good Souls, who through Ignorance or Error are held back, and becauſe of their over-high Veneration for it, think themſelves unworthy to come to it, whilſt in the honeſty of their Hearts they thus miſtake it. But he will not excuſe it in them when they are better inform'd; and much leſs in others, who neglect it becauſe they are careleſs of it, or too Wicked and impenitent to receive it.* Page 126

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the Benefits of Communicating.

The Sacrament is full of Blessings, which make it not only our Duty, but our Privilege. In the general, *it is the most effectual means in all Religion to recommend our Prayers, and make them powerful; and so is the likeliest way to attain all Mercies.* In particular, 1. *It seals to us the Pardon of our Sins for the Peace of our Consciences.* 2. *It encreases and Confirms in us all Graces. Those are ordinarily such as we bring along with us. It confers Grace,* 1. *By the Natural Virtue and Tendency of those Duties, which it both exercises and excites in us.* 2. *By those inward Assistances, which it conveys to us. Since on all these accounts it is so excellent a Means of Grace and New Life, 'tis the best Rule any Person can observe who would go on in the Work of Repentance. All these Motives to Communicate, both from Duty and Interest, summ'd up.* Page 167

CHAP.

PART III.

Of the Hindrances that keep Men from the Communion.

CHAP. I.

Two Hindrances from Communicating.

One moſt general Hindrance, that keeps men from the Sacrament, is a Fear of their being Unworthy and Unfit to receive it. This Anſwer'd, by ſhewing, 1. *The Partiality of it, becauſe they are not ſo ſcrupulous about Neglecting, as about Unworthy Receiving, though there be the ſame Cauſe for it.* 2. *That every true Penitent is worthy of it: Yea, he that has only fully purpoſed Amendment, though he has not had time to perform it.* 3. *Impenitence, which unfits them for it, is no Excuſe for the Neglect of it.* 4. *Impenitent men, who alone are unfit, if they underſtand the danger of their State, cannot continue in it, but amend it, and then they may worthily Communicate.* 2. *A* Second *Hindrance is, becauſe an Unworthy Receiver eats his own Damnation,* 1 Cor. 11. 29. *which makes not Receiving*

ving ſeem the ſafer ſide. By Damnation is meant, 1. *A Damning Sin, which is deadly till we repent of it; and ſuch are both unworthy Eating, and ſinful Abſtaining, ſo that they are equal as to that Point.* 2. *Temporal Penalties, which were inflicted for their Intemperance at this Feaſt, and other Diſorders peculiar to thoſe Times, and are not now uſual in ours; ſo that the Fear of them need not diſcourage us from it.* Page 197

CHAP. II.

Of Three other Hindrances from Receiving.

A Third *Hindrance is, becauſe therein they are to promiſe concerning every Sin, that they will no more commit it; which Promiſe ſome dare not make, becauſe they fear they ſhall not keep it. If this be ſufficient to hinder any man from the Communion, it ought alſo to hinder him from Prayers, and being Baptized a Chriſtian. But it muſt not hinder men from any of them.* 1. *Let them promiſe this Amendment, and keep it, and then the Doubt is anſwered. They ought to make it. And by God's Grace they may perform it, if they have a mind to it.* 2. *If after ſome time*

time they happen to break it in any Inſtance, they have the Benefit of Repentance afterwards. A Fourth *Hindrance is the great difficulty ſuppoſed to be in it, and want of time and leiſure to prepare for it. This lies not more againſt the Communion, than againſt an Holy Life, and all Religion. But it muſt not put us by from any of them. For,* 1. *If it required all that Time and Pains which is ſuppoſed, that would be no Excuſe for any of us to neglect it. To true Penitents, the Time and Pains is not ſo great as is imagined. It requires more of Ill men, but leſs of Good, who may prepare for it in a leſs time, yea, if uſed to Self-examinations, upon a few Minutes warning.* 3. *The poorest and moſt imployed have time ſufficient, if they would uſe it to that end: and where they have fewer helps, and leſs time, the leſs Preparation is accepted of them.* A Fifth *Hindrance is, becauſe they ſee others, or have found themſelves to be no better by it; ſo that 'tis not worth their while to fit themſelves for it. If this have any Force, it is not to be reſtrained to the Sacrament, but holds ſtronger againſt Prayers, and other Parts of Worſhip. But it ought not to hinder any Perſons. For,* 1. *Where it is true, there is no Excuſe from it.* 2. *In all good*

mens case 'tis false, for they are really better by it; many by improving in their goodness, all by continuing in it, for which it is richly worth their pains to come to it. 3. Where they are not bettered at all, or not so much as might be expected; that is purely through their own Fault, in not using the means of improving by it: so let them amend that, and this Hindrance is removed. Page 223

CHAP. III.

Of want of Charity.

A Sixth *Hindrance is a Fear lest they want that Charity, particularly towards Enemies and those who have given them Provocations, which is required to it. An account what Love is, and what is not due to such Persons. 1. We are bound to shew them all the Offices of general Charity, which are due to our Neighbour at large, or to all others. This Love contains in it all the Particular Offices of Justice, Charity, and Peace, which are due to all mankind: It is transgressed by all the opposite Instances, but by nothing more than hard and unchandid Censures and Suspicions. The commonness and sinfulness of this Carriage. The want of this Charity.*

vity unfits men for this Feast; but so it doth for Prayers, and all other Religious Worship. 2. We are not bound to shew them all the Offices of special Esteem, Trust, and Confidence, which are not fit to be placed on all men, but on such only as are qualified for them. When they sufficiently shew Repentance of their Fault, they are to be re-admitted to the same state of Favour and Friendship. We must be Candid in Judging when their Repentance is sufficiently evidenced. An humble Confession is ordinarily a sufficient Proof of it for the first Fault; but not when it has been oft repeated. Luc. 17. 4, *which seems to affirm it, answer'd. Several Cases clear'd, which are sometimes thought by Pious Souls to be a breach of Charity towards Enemies, but in reality are not. As, not forgetting Injuries or Unkindnesses, but still retaining a Remembrance of them. Thinking the worse of those who offered them. Being troubled at the sight of them, as that puts them in mind of the great Losses they have sustain'd by them. Shewing more reserve, and carrying a greater distance in Conversing with them, than with other men. These are no breach of Charity towards them, nor can be a just Hindrance from the Communion.* Page 262

CHAP. IV.

Of Law-Suits.

They are an Hindrance from the Communion, when there is ſin in them. They are not ſinful in themſelves, which is ſhewn, 1. *From the neceſſity of them.* 2. *From the Magiſtrates Office being appointed for them.* 3. *From Gods taking Legal Determinations upon himſelf, as if he were the Author of them.* 4. *From Courts erected by conſent in the Apoſtles Days, which miniſtred to them. Theſe St.* Paul *preſcribed to the* Corinthians, 1 Cor. 6. *They are the Aſſemblies mention'd* Jam. 2. 2, 5. *From our Saviours, and St.* Pauls *Practice, who in claiming the Benefit of them, warranted and authorized them. An Objection from* Mat. 5. 38, 39, 40. *conſider'd; which is ſhewn not to condemn defending our ſelves in any caſe when others implead us; nor moving Suits in all, but only in caſe of lighter Loſſes and Indignities, ſuch as our Saviour there mentions, or making them miniſter to Revenge in any others. And* 1 Cor. 6. 7. *anſwered, which makes them not a Damning ſin, but only when ſome Virtuous ends do not require them, a Defect and Diminution.*

nution. *But they are ſinful.* 1. *When they are begun upon an unjuſtifiable Ground. Such they always are,* 1. *When they are Vindictive, not Reparative; as when we ſue inſolvent Perſons; or others upon ſuch Words or Actions, for which, beſides Coſts, no Damages that are valuable are like to be allotted us.* 2. *When they are for Reparation of ſmall things, which countervail not the evil and hazard of a Suit, but ought to be a matter of Patience and Forgiveneſs, and ſo be quietly put up without recourſe to it. In judging of this ſmallneſs, we muſt not eſtimate by our own Pride and Paſſions; but by the reality of Things, and the Judgment of indifferent, humble, and diſpaſſionate Perſons. This is true, not only in caſe of Injuries to our own ſelves, but alſo in caſe of Truſt, when we have the charge of others.* 2. *Suits are ſinful when they are carried on by a ſinful Management: As they are, when they make us tranſgreſs any of thoſe Duties towards our Adverſaries, which oblige us towards all Perſons. To avoid all theſe in Suing, is an hard Point: So we muſt be ſlow in coming to it, and very circumſpect when we are forced upon it. The Anſwer to this Hindrance ſumm'd up.* Page 304

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of Three other Hindrances.

A Seventh *Hindrance, is, becauſe others are not in Charity with them, ſo that they are afraid they want that Peace which is required to it. As for other mens uncharitableneſs, it is their ſin, and ſo unfits them; but not being ours, it unfits not us for Receiving. If that ought to exclude any from the Sacrament, it had excluded Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and the Primitive Chriſtians, ſince none had ever ſuch implacable Enemies as they had. Care to be taken that their Enmity be not continued through our Fault; ſo that if we have given juſt occaſion, we muſt endeavour a Reconciliation; and if we gave none, be careful not to hate them again. An* Eighth *Hindrance is, becauſe 'tis a Preſumption in us to come to it, and therefore an Humble man ought in all modeſty to abſtain from it. But, 1. 'Tis no Preſumption to come when we are call'd, and to do what we are bidden. 2. 'Tis a very great Preſumption to ſtay away, and leave it undone. 3. If the height of Priviledge and Honour in it be ſufficient to make an humble man refuſe the Communion; it will

will also carry him to renounce the whole Christian Profession. A Ninth *Hindrance is, because many good People are seldom or never seen at it, so that they have good Company, and may be good too, if they abstain from it. But,* 1. *In inquiring after our own Duty, we are not to ask whether others practise it, but whether Christ has any where enjoyn'd it.* 2. *If any Good People keep from the Sacrament, that is no part of their Goodness, so that therein they are not to be imitated.* 3. *Though they might be acceptably Good, whilst through innocent Scruples and honest Ignorance they were afraid to come to it: yet will it be a very great Fault even in them to Neglect it after they are better informed, which will not be forgiven, but upon their Amendment of it.* Page 362

CHAP. VI.

Of Two more Hindrances.

A Tenth *Hindrance is, because others who are unworthy of it, are admitted to join in it. But,* 1. *They ought not to be forward in judging others unworthy, lest they be mistaken in it.* 2. *When some, who, as they have great cause to think, are unworthy, do receive, yet ought not that to hinder*

hinder them from joining in it. For if it be a ſufficient Hindrance, it had equally hindred our Saviour Chriſt, and the Primitive Chriſtians. It ought not only to hinder us from the Communion, but alſo from being Members of the Chriſtian Church and Profeſſion; but 'tis plainly of no Force for either of them, ſince one man ſhall not bear another's, but every man his own burden. 3. If ſtill any are really offended at the Communion of the Wicked, upon complaint made in the Congregation they are to be ſuſpended from the Holy Table, and denied the Sacrament. An Eleventh *Hindrance is the Geſture of Kneeling, which is required to it. When any are abſent upon this account, there is no excuſe from it. Three things inſiſted on to prevent their being hindred by it. 1. Kneeling is no unſuitable Poſture in receiving, ſo that if we were left at Liberty, we might have enough to juſtifie our ſelves in making uſe of it. 2. It is appointed by our Governours, whom God Commands us to obey in all lawful Things; ſo that every Good man ought to obſerve it. But if it neither had Authority to injoyn, nor Reaſon to recommend it, but another Poſture might be better uſed: Yet, 3. Since it may lawfully, though not ſo well, be uſed too, for the Sacraments ſake, which*

which is not otherwiſe to be had, we ſhould at leaſt comply with it. No Hindrance to this Complyance, becauſe the Geſture of Kneeling is different from what our Saviour uſed. For ſo is ſitting too, and therefore they and we are equally concerned to anſwer it. The Poſture he uſed was no part of the Inſtitution, ſo that the Inſtitution is not broken when the Poſture is altered. Neither it, nor any other, has any Command of God for it; ſo that none is neceſſary, but all are ſtill indifferent. When a Poſture, different from that at the firſt Inſtitution, was introduced in Sacraments, our Saviour himſelf, and they too have ſubmitted to it. Again, no hindrance to it from the fear of worſhiping the Bread, or its being a Popiſh Rite. A concluſion of this point. Page 381

CHAP. VII.

Of ſome other Hindrances.

An Account of ſome other Hindrances. One abſtains becauſe the day before he was at a Feaſt. Another, becauſe his Child is ſick, or he himſelf is lighty indiſpoſed. A third, becauſe his Wife or Husband cannot come along with him to joyn in it. A fourth, becauſe he has a Viſit to make,

or a Friend come in, who in all civility must be attended. A fifth, because of a Shower of Rain, or a sharp Air abroad, so that he must endure a piercing Blast, or wet his Foot, to go out to it. These are no Excuse from it, but still Men are bound to Communicate. Some Devout Meditations and Prayers to help them in a Worthy Discharge of it. After they have received, they must be careful to make good those holy Vows and Promises which they made to God in the Holy Sacrament. Page 421

Heads of Self-Examination, *for the use of those who would find out what Sins they have to Repent of, either before a* Sacrament, *or at any* other *Times.* Page 465

A Prayer before the Sacrament. Page 474

A Prayer and Thanksgiving after the Sacrament. Page 478

A Morning Prayer for a Family. Page 484

An Evening Prayer for a Family. Page 487

A N

AN HELP AND EXHORTATION TO Worthy Communicating.

The INTRODUCTION.

IN this matter of the Holy Sacrament of the *Lords Supper*, there are two great Faults which are every where incurr'd, and which all that Love their Saviour or their own Souls ought moſt carefully to avoid; and they are, a *Refuſal* or *Neglect*, and an *unworthy Uſage* or *Prophanation* of it; both which are moſt offenſive to Almighty God, and to our dear Lord. For our Bleſſed Saviour has appointed it, and expreſly commanded us to come to it, and ſhew'd us by manifeſt To-

kens that he lays a particular weight upon it; ſo that we are greatly undutiful and diſobedient if we keep back from it: And he has appointed it for ſacred Ends and ſolemn Purpoſes, which call for a very Reverent and Devout Carriage; ſo that we prophane it if we come careleſly, and behave our ſelves unworthily when we approach thereto. It is a moſt *neceſſary* part of our Religion, and therefore not to be paſſed over, and let alone through Negligence; and a moſt *awful* one, and therefore not to be perform'd with diſreſpect, and an irreverent Carriage. So that we muſt be careful, both to partake of this Holy Feaſt when we are called to it, and to come to it worthily when we do. And this St. *Paul* preſcribes concerning it, 1 *Cor.* 11. *Let a man examine himſelf*, ſays he, *and ſo let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.* v. 28. *Let a man examine himſelf*, *i.e.* let him *approve* himſelf, as the † word here rendered *examin* ſignifies *v.* † 19, and *Chap.* 16. *v.* * 3: let him ſo long try his fitneſs for it, till he ſee cauſe to like and approve himſelf, and think he is worthy of it; for he would not call unworthy Receivers to the Sacrament, but

† δοκιμάζετω.

† οἱ δόκιμοι, *they that are approved may be made manifeſt.*

* ὃς ἐὰν δοκιμάσῃς, *Whatſoever you ſhall approve.*

but drive them from it, as he doth by telling them the *extream danger* of it, *v.* 27, 29. But when once he is ſo approved, and fit to come to it, then, ſays he, let him not forbear the Feaſt, but haſten to partake in it; *Let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.*

Thus are both a *careleſs Forbearance*, and an *indecent unworthy Uſage* of this Holy Feaſt, great Indignities to our Bleſſed Lord, and criminal Violations of it. It ſuffers on either hand, ſo that to ſecure it in its juſt eſteem and due obſervance, both are carefully to be removed. And to do what Right I can to this Holy Ordinance, and what Service I am able to all ſuch as ſhall ſeek help from this Treatiſe, I ſhall endeavour, what in me lies, to cure, or prevent both, in that which follows.

Now to do this with the greater clearneſs, in Diſcourſing upon this Subject I ſhall do theſe five things.

1*ſt*, I ſhall ſhew *What is the meaning of eating Bread and drinking Wine in the Bleſſed Sacrament.*

2ly, *Wherein lies the worthineſs of doing it.*

3ly, *How much it is every good Chriſtians Duty to frequent it.*

4ly, *What great inducements we have to*

it, and how great the Benefits are that come by it, which ſhould make us preſs to it of our ſelves, though it were not commanded.

5ly, I ſhall *conſider thoſe Excuſes, and take off thoſe Pleas, which are moſt uſually made againſt it.*

And when all this is done, I think I ſhall have ſaid enough, both to invite, and preſs men to this Feaſt, and alſo to a worthy partaking of it, that ſo they may come to it when they are invited, and be welcome and worthy Gueſts when they do.

PART I.

The meaning of Feasting in the Sacrament.

CHAP. I.

Of the meaning of our eating and drinking in the Sacrament.

The Contents.

Three Ends of Feasting in the Lords Supper. 1 *End is in Remembrance and Commemoration of our Saviour Christ, and of his dying for us. To remember him is not barely to call to mind that once there was such a Person, but to think of his particular Quality and Relation to us, which are worth remembring, as of his being our most Faithful Teacher, our most gracious Governour, our most intire Friend, and noble Benefactor. These things usually commemorated by Festivals.* 2 *End is in*

confirmation of the New Covenant which his Death purchased for us. An account of the New Covenant. Christs Death purchased it: It is ratified in the Holy Sacrament, which is shown from the same thing being done in Baptism, Circumcision, and the Passover which answered to it: more particularly, 1. From the Words of Institution, wherein the Cup is call'd the New Covenant, and we are bid to drink of it, which was a Covenant-Rite; and the Bread Christs Body, to the same intent the Paschal Lamb was, which was a Federal Conveyance of it. 2. From its being a Feast or Sacrifice, for Sacrifice is one way of Covenanting with God, and by Feasting on it we partake of it. 3. From its conveying the particular Blessings of the New Covenant, which otherwise than by Federal Promises, or Performances are not to be had. 3 End is in Ratification of a League of Love and Friendship with those Brethren that Communicate with us, and with all others. This Chapter summ'd up.

FIrst, I shall shew *what is the meaning of eating Bread and drinking Wine in the Blessed Sacrament, and what we are to understand by them, and think of them, when we do them.*

When

When we come to eat Bread and drink Wine in the Holy Sacrament, we must not come only for a Bodily refreshment, or for eating and drinkings sake, as we do to our common Food: For *this is to eat*, as St. *Paul* says, *not discerning the Lords Body*; but as if it were bare ordinary Meat, 1 *Cor.* 11. 29. But we must eat and drink with *special ends*, and *particular Intentions*, which may render our eating and drinking, not an *ordinary Repast*, but a *Religious Feasting* upon the *Body* and *Blood of our Lord*. And these ends are three.

1*st*. In *Remembrance and Commemoration of our Saviour Christ, and of his dying for us.*

2*ly*, In *Confirmation of the New Covenant, which his Death procured us.*

3*ly*, In *Ratification of a League of Love and Friendship with those Brethren that Communicate with us, and with all others.*

First, We must eat Bread and drink Wine in *Remembrance and Commemoration of our Saviour Christ, and of his dying for us.* By these Actions we must be put in remembrance and call to mind our selves, and commemorate or tell it out to others, what a good Friend and Saviour Christ has been to us, and how at last he died and gave his own Hearts Blood for our sakes. And this our Blessed Lord expresly ordered at the time of Institution, *This do*, says

says he, both of the *eating Bread*, and *drinking Wine, in remembrance of me*, 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25.

To *Remember* one, is not barely to *call to mind* that once there was *such a Person*; but also to think of their *particular Quality* and *Relation*, what they are to us, or what they have left with us, or what they have done for us which is worth Remembring. If we bid a *Servant* remember us, we intend he should be mindful of the *Commands* which we have left with him; if a *Friend*, that he should bear in mind the Great *Love* and *Faithfulness* which we have always expressed towards him; if one we have *highly obliged*, that he should *gratefully resent*, and think of the *kindnesses* which we have done him; or if *one*, lastly, *whose favour we desire*, and of whom we have requested any thing, that he would be mindful of the *Good turn* which he *promises* to do, or which we *ask* of him. In desiring any of these, or any others to remember us, we mean not barely that they should call to mind how once there were such men as we in being; but, over and above that, that they be particularly mindful of the Relation wherein we stand, and think of what we have done, what we deserve, or what we desire or expect from them.

And

And this our Bleſſed Lord intends, when in this Holy Feaſt he Deſires, and Commands us to remember him. He would have us think of him in all thoſe Capacities, and reflect upon him under all thoſe Relations, wherein he ſo infinitely deſerves to be remembred by us: Such as are that of a *Faithful Teacher*, a *Gracious Governour*, an *intire Friend* and noble *Benefactor*, doing the higheſt kindneſſes, and working the greateſt deliverances *for us*, and for *all Mankind*.

1*ſt*, He would have us remember him as our *Faithful Teacher*, who has made known to us the whole Counſel of God concerning us, and to call to mind thoſe excellent things which he has revealed to us. As namely, That for the ſake of his Death, and through the merits of his Blood, all mankind, who were utter Enemies before, ſhall be put into a way of Reconciliation with God, and have the Benefit of a New Covenant, which proffers Pardon to all that truly Repent, and Spiritual help and inward Grace to all that carefully indeavour with it, and the Bleſſings of Heaven and Happineſs to all that are intirely obedient, promiſing that at our Death our Souls ſhall go into Paradiſe, and at the General Judgment our Bodies, which till then were held in their

Graves, shall be raised up again to Eternal Life.

2*ly*, He would have us remember him as our *Gracious Governour*, whom God has anointed to give Laws to us, and to recollect and bear in mind those Commands, which, as our Soveraign Lord and Master, he has laid upon us. As namely, That we love God, and trust in his Goodness, and submit to his Providence, and Worship him with Prayers and Praises, but above all with an Holy and a God-like Life; that we be Humble and Heavenly-minded, Chaste, Temperate, and Contented; that we be dutiful to our Governours, respectful to our Superiours, courteous to our Equals, condescensive to our Inferiours, grateful to our Friends, loving and obliging to our Enemies, and just, charitable, and peaceable towards all Persons, of whatsoever Nations, Sects, or Parties, even to all Mankind.

3*ly*, He would have us remember him as our *most intire Friend*, and noble *Benefactor*, who let us in so deep into his Heart, and heaped his Favours on us at so prodigious a rate, as never was, nor ever will be equall'd. For he loved us without any thing of our own Deserts; and in spite of our highest Provocations;

and

and without expecting any other recompence, besides the Pleasure of being kind to us; and to such a degree, as made him forego the greatest pleasures which he might have held without all interruption in Heavenly places, and become a man of Sorrows, and lead a Persecuted, difficult, and necessitous Life, and at last dye a most exquisitely painful, and ignominious Death for our sakes, which ransom'd us from the greatest Curse, and procured us the most valuable Blessings that our Nature can admit of. And this Benefit of his Death, being not only in it self the costliest, but the very price and purchase of all the rest, he would have remembred above all others in this Feast; and accordingly he has suited the Food in it to be broken Bread, and Wine poured out, which do most lively represent it. *As often as you eat this Bread, and drink this Cup*, saith the Apostle, *you* exhibit to all that look on and observe it, or *shew* forth *the Lords Death till he come*, 1 Cor. 11. 26.

These are the things which our Saviour Christ calls us seriously to remember and consider of in our own minds, and which the Actions themselves commonorate and shew forth to others, when we eat

eat Bread and drink Wine in this holy Sacrament. When we partake of this Feast, which he has appointed us, he would have us remember him, and think with our selves how *Faithful a Teacher* he was to us, and what good Lessons and Declarations he has left with us; how *gracious a Lord* and Master he proved, and what Commandments he has laid upon us; and lastly, how *kind a Friend*, and *noble Benefactor* he shewed himself, and what astonishing kindnesses he has done for us in all the Labours of his Life, but especially and above all in his suffering a bloody Death for our sakes, which purchased us the Forgiveness of our Sins, the Grace and Spirit of God, and Eternal happiness. All this *Faithful Teacher*, and *Gracious Governour*, and *intire Friend*, and *noble Benefactor* Christ is to us in the highest Measures, and to all imaginable Degrees; and since he is so, he would have us to bear it in mind, and oftentimes to think of it. And that we may be sure to do it, he has instituted this Feast on purpose for it, and told us that our work is to call to mind and remember him whensoever we come to it.

And this way of having these things remembred, by appointing Feasts for the Com-

Commemoration of them, has been very uſual in the World. Thus the † *Diſciples*, in the ſeveral *Sects of Philoſophers* at *Athens*, were wont to have a ſet Feaſt and Collation in remembrance of their Founders. And it has been the way of all the World to remember their Benefactors, and commemorate ſome great Bleſſings, by *Feſtivals*. Thus at this day we commemorate the deliverance from the *Powder-Treaſon*, and the *Kings happy Reſtauration*, by a yearly Feſtival upon that occaſion. And the whole *Chriſtian Church* has perpetuated the memory of *Chriſts Nativity*, *Reſurrection*, and the *Deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt*, by the yearly Feaſts of *Chriſtmas*, *Eaſter*, and *Pentecoſt*. And God himſelf in the old Teſtement call'd men to a remembrance of the *Creation of the World* by the Feaſt of the *Seventh day Sabbath*; and all the *Jews* to the commemoration of his ſparing all their *Firſt-Born*, when the deſtroying Angel ſlew all the Firſt-Born of *Egypt*, by the yearly

† Πολλῶν γὰρ ἐν ταῖς φιλοσόφων ἐν ἄστει συνόδοις, τῶν μὲν Διογενιστῶν, τῶν δὲ Ἀντιπατριστῶν λεγομένων, τῶν δὲ Πανατιαστῶν. *Athen. Deipn. l. 5. c. 1.*

Diogeniſtæ, Antipatriſtæ, Panætiaſtæ appellati ſant, qui ſtato anni Die Diogenis, Antipatri, & Panætii nobilium Philoſophorum memoriam celebrarent. Iſ. Caſaub. *ad loc. Animadv. c. 1.*

yearly Festival of the *Passover* appointed for that very purpose, *Exod.* 12. 14.

This then is the first end of our eating Bread and drinking Wine at the Lords Table, it is *in remembrance of our Saviour Christ*, and *of what he has done for us*. So that when we partake in this Feast of his appointment, we must seriously reflect on him who has appointed it, and bethink our selves that he is our Faithful Teacher, calling to mind his Revelations; our Soveraign Lord and Master, remembring his Commandments; our intire Friend, Saviour, and Benefactor, who has done strange things for us, but above all, who has laid down his own Life to purchase us the Pardon of our Sins, and Spiritual Grace, and Eternal Happiness, upon our Repentance, Obedience, and Virtuous endeavours. With these Thoughts he would have us entertain our minds, at the same time we Feast our Bodies with the Creatures of Bread and Wine which he has prepared for us: and if we would answer his end in it, and be welcome Guests at this Feast when he calls to it, we must be sure so to do.

And as we must eat Bread and drink Wine at the Lords Table in remembrance of our Saviour Christ, and of his dying for us; so must we,

2ly, *In*

2ly, *In Confirmation of the New Covenant, which his Death purchased and procured us.*

This Covenant is a *mutual contract and ingagement between God and us*; and consists of several Articles agreed to on *Gods* side, and several on *ours*. As for *Gods part, to all Believers, i.e.* to all that believe the Scriptures, and particularly that part of them, these his promises, without a belief whereof they will have no list or encouragement to set about the performance of the Conditions required on their parts: to all Believers, I say, he promises *three* Things, *viz.* the *forgiveness of Sins*, the *assistance of the Spirit*, and *Eternal happiness*. And answerably on *their Parts* they promise *three* more, which three indeed are all summ'd up in one, *i.e.* the last of them: and those are, to *Repent of all their Sins*, to *endeavour with his Grace*, and to *obey all his Commandments*.

He promises to *forgive them all their Sins*. For this is one Article of the New Covenant, as the Apostle relates it, *Heb.* 8. *This is the Covenant I will make with them in those days, I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more, v.* 10. 12. But then at the same time he expects, and accordingly they promise that they will *Repent of them*, and *forsake them*. For he orders *Repentance* and

and *Remission of Sins* to be preached both together, *Luc.* 24. *That Repentance and Remission of sins should be preached in his Name to all Nations*, v. 47; and tells us expressly, that *except we repent we shall all perish*, Luc. 13. 3.

He promises them the *assistance of his Spirit to enable them to do his will and become obedient*. For this also is reckoned as another Article of *the Covenant made with Abraham, that he would grant unto us* the Power *to serve him in Holiness and Righteousness all the days of our Lives*, Luc. 1. 72, 73, 74, 75. and the great Promise of the Gospel is, that *God will give his Holy Spirit to those that ask him*, *Luc.* 11. 13. But then he expects, and accordingly they promise, that they will use and improve his Grace whensoever it is intrusted with them, and endeavour after all Virtues as they stand in need of them. *God works in us both to will and to do*, says St. *Paul*, when we join with him, and *work out our own Salvation*, *Phil.* 2. 12, 13: and 'tis only *to him that hath*, saith our Saviour, *i. e.* to him that hath improved the *Talents* bestowed on him, as those *Good Servants* had done, who had gain'd the † v. 20. one † *five*, the other * *two* * v. 22. Talents with them, that *more shall be given, and he shall have abun-*

abundance; *but from him that hath not*, *i. e.* hath not improved what he received, as the *wicked Servant* had not done, who *went* and † *hid it*, † *v.* 25. *ſhall be taken away even that which he hath*, *Mat.* 25. 29. And that this is Gods ordinary Rule where he intruſts any thing, he expreſly declares again upon another occaſion, *Luc.* 19. 26.

He promiſes them, laſtly, *eternal Life and happineſs. This*, ſays St. *John*, *is the Promiſe which he hath promiſed us*, *even Eternal Life*, 1 *Joh.*2. 25. But then he expects, and at the ſame time we promiſe, that we will obey all his Laws, and do every thing which he requires of us. For *Chriſt is become the Author of Eternal Salvation*, ſays the Apoſtle, *to thoſe* only *that obey him*, Heb.5. 9 : and *bleſſed are they that do his Commandments*, ſays St. *John*, *for they* only *have Right to the Tree of Life*, Rev. 22. 14.

So that the *New Covenant* is a *mutual Contract* and *Ingagement between God and Men*, wherein he promiſes to *all that Believe*, and accordingly they accept it, that he will *forgive them their Sins when they Repent of them*, and *help them to any Graces when they concur with him and endeavour after them*, and *give them Eternal Life after they have intirely obeyed him*.

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He promises Pardon, Inward Grace, and everlasting Happiness; but then they, having Faith or Belief already, without an actual exercise whereof they would not seek after this Covenant, nor, if they did, could be admitted to it, make Promise to him again of Repentance, virtuous endeavours, and an intire obedience, which must confer a claim, and give them right thereto.

This is the New Covenant, and this Christs Bloody Death has purchased and procured for us. God would not dispense with the *First* Covenant without a Ransome that might remove all hindrances, by securing the Honour of his Holiness, and utterly discouraging all future offences, and satisfying all the ends of Justice: and because that could not otherwise be so well effected, as he thought fit it should, Christ himself became an *expiatory Sacrifice*, and, by dying for it, obtained the *Second*. And for this cause it is called the New Covenant in his Blood, *i. e.* that Covenant which was confirmed and purchased by it. *This*, says he, *is the New Testament*, or rather, † Καινὴ διαθήκη. the *New* † *Covenant in my Blood*, 1 Cor. 11. 25.

Now this Covenant, which is the purchase of Christs Death, and which is the

the ſumm and ſubſtance of all that he has got for us, we all entred into at firſt when we were *Baptized.* For *Baptiſm* is our *Sealing of this Covenant*, and *ſtipulating* or ingaging to make good theſe Terms to Almighty God; *Baptiſm*, ſays St. * *Peter*, * 1 *Pet.* 3. 21. is *the Anſwer*, or † *Stipulation of a good Conſcience towards God*; *i. e.* it is the *Federal Promiſe*, or *undertaking* of it, which every Perſon makes when he is Baptized. And this is plain from that *form* of the *Baptiſmal Vow* which the *Primitive* Chriſtians uſed, and which *we* uſe now at preſent, wherein, if they are *grown* Perſons, they *themſelves*, or if *Children*, their *God-fathers* and *God-mothers* in their Names do expreſly Covenant and ingage for that *Faith*, *Repentance* or *Renouncing* of all Sins, and *Obedience* to Gods Laws, which are required by it.

† ἐπερώτημα,

And as we *firſt entred* into this *Covenant* when we were *Baptiſed*; ſo are we called to *renew* and *confirm* it every time we are invited to *ſup* with our Lord in this Holy *Sacrament*. When he Summons us to eat Bread, and drink Wine in remembrance of his Death at this Feaſt; he calls us withall to confirm this New Covenant, which his Death procured,

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and which was the price and purchase of it. He invites us to receive ingagements from God of his promised Mercies, and to give him ingagements of our Duty and Service: to be assured by him, that, if we do *believe* the Scriptures, he will *forgive* us our Sins upon our *Repentance*, and give his *Grace* and *Spirit* to our *endeavours*, and make us *eternally happy* upon our *obedience*; and to assure him, that we do so *believe*, and are resolv'd so to *repent*, *endeavour*, and *obey*, that so by virtue of his Gracious Promise we may have right thereto. He intends our eating and drinking at his Table as a *Federal Rite*, and for a Renewal and Ratification of this League of Love and Friendship: So that at the same time we eat and drink in remembrance of Christs Death which procured the Covenant, we must solemnly give our Consent to it, and expresly ratify and confirm it too.

This may fairly be presumed to be one end of the Holy Communion, because it is the end of *Baptism*, † 1 *Pet.* 3. 21. which St. *Peter* calls a † *Stipulation*, and which, as we have seen, is our entrance into the *Gospel-Covenant* and *Religion*. And since it is so evidently the use of that, in great likeli-

likelihood it is of this too; for both the Sacraments were ſtill held of like *Uſe*, *Nature*, and *Signification*.

Nay, this was the end, not only of the *Chriſtian*, but alſo of the *Jewiſh Sacraments*, which ſhews it was not peculiar to any one, but runs through all of them.

For as for *Circumciſion*, it was a Federal Rite or Sign. It bound the *Jews* (as before it had done the *Patriarchs*) to God, and God to them, in the *Covenant Moſes* gave them, by a mutual Obligation. For therein they promiſed to perform all that the *Law injoined--He that is Circumciſed*, ſays St. *Paul*, *is a Debtor to keep the whole Law*, *Gal.* 5. 3. And thereby they were aſſured of the *Righteouſneſs* and *Benefits God* had *promiſed*——Abraham *received Circumciſion as a Seal of the Righteouſneſs of Faith*, ſays the ſame Apoſtle, *i. e.* as a Seal or Confirmation of the Promiſes made to it, *Rom.* 4. 11. And becauſe it was thus a ſign to both parts, and a Rite uſed at their engaging in it, *Circumciſion* is call'd *the Covenant*, *i. e.* the Solemn Ceremony and undertaking of it, *Gen.* 17. 10. *Act.* 7. 8.

And then as for the *Paſſover*, it alſo was a *Covenanting Ceremony* and *Federal Rite*, as may ſufficiently appear from its being a *Feaſt on Sacrifice*, which is the moſt Solemn

lemn way of *Covenanting* with God. And this use of the *Passover* is of the greater weight to conclude the same of the *Lords Supper*, because among us this answers to it, and comes in stead of it. It answers to it, I say; for our *bleeding Lord* was the Great thing which their *Sacrificed Lamb* signified, whence he is called

†1 Pet. 1. 19. * Rev. 13. 8. † Joh. 1. 29.

the † *Lamb without Blemish and without Spot, the* * *Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World,* and *the* † *Lamb of God that takes away the sins of Mankind:* and our *Feasting* upon his *body* and *blood* is the same with their *Feasting upon it*, as St. *Paul* plainly intimates, when he says *Christ our Passover is Sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep* our Eucharistical *Feast* upon him in it, answerable to what they did upon the Lamb in theirs, 1 *Cor.* 5. 7, 8. And at the Institution of the Holy Sacrament, our Saviour intimated that the Passover was abolish'd, and that this was henceforward to succeed and come in stead of it. For immediately before he appointed his *own Supper*, he tells them *he would not any more eat of the Lamb*, or *drink of the Wine* in the Passover; *i. e.* he would abolish this, so as we should no more eat or drink of it; and substitute that in place of it, *Luc.* 22. 16, 18.

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And now ſince 'tis *the general Nature of Sacraments*, both among *Jews* and *Chriſtians*, to be *Covenanting Rites*; ſince *Baptiſm plainly is, that goes hand in hand with it*; and ſince the *Paſſover was, which preceded and anſwerd to it*, this being ſubſtituted in place, and put inſtead of it: in all likelihood the *Sacrament of the Lords Supper is a Federal Feaſt*, and a *Covenanting Rite* too.

But to prove this yet more particularly, That this *Holy Sacrament is intended for a Federal Rite*, and for our *Renewal* and *Ratification of the New Covenant*, will appear,

1*ſt*, From the *words of Inſtitution*, wherein the *Cup* is call'd the *New Covenant*, and we are bid to *drink* of it, which is a *Federal Rite*; and the *Bread* is call'd *Chriſts Body* to the ſame intent as the *Paſchal Lamb* was, which was a *Federal Conveyance* of it.

2ly, From its being a *Feaſt upon Sacrifice*, which is a *Federal Feaſt*; for *Sacrifice* is one way of *Covenanting with God*, and by *Feaſting on the Sacrifice* we *joyn* in and *partake* of it.

3ly, From *all the particular Bleſſings of the Covenant being conveyed by it*, which otherwiſe than by *Federal Promiſes* or *Performances* are not to be had.

1*ſt*, That our *eating Bread* and *drink-*

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ing Wine in the Holy Sacrament, is intended for a *Federal Rite*, and for our Renewal and Ratification of the New Covenant, appears from *the words of Institution*, wherein *the Cup is called the New Covenant*, and we are *bid to drink of it*, which is a *Covenanting Rite*; and the *Bread is call'd Christs Body* to the same intent as the *Pascal Lamb* was, which also was a *Federal Conveyance* of it.

1. In the words of Institution the *Cup* is called the *New Covenant*. *This Cup*, says our Saviour, *is the New* † διαθήκη. *Testament*, or † *Covenant, in my Blood*, 1 Cor. 11. 25.

And we are all bid to *drink* of it, which is a *Federal Rite*, and was then a known Ceremony of confirming any Covenant. *Drink ye all of it*, says he to his Disciples, *Mat.* 26. 27.

This drinking of it, as it is an Application of it to our selves, and taking it into our own Bodies, is a plain sign of our ingaging in it, and adhering to it; for thereby we shew that we close with, and embrace it. But this is still further evident, because anciently among the *Jews*, and other *Eastern Nations*, *eating* and *drinking* were *Federal Rites*, whereby they were wont mutually to Seal *Leagues of friendship*, and *confirm Covenants*

venants with each other. For they uſed to bind their Compacts by a *Friendly Treat*, and to conſummate them in an *Hoſpitable Entertainment*. Thus we read in the Story of *Laban* and *Jacob*: for when *Laban* demands, *Come thou, let us make a Covenant, I and thou*; Gen. 31. 44; *Jacob*'s Conſent to it is expreſſed by this, —*he ſaid unto his Brethren, Gather ſtones; and they took ſtones, and made an heap, and did eat there upon the heap*; by that Note of Friendſhip anſwering the Demand, and confirming the Covenant which was propoſed, v. 46. And ſo *Joſhua*'s *Covenanting*, or *making Peace* with the *Gibeonites* when they came to ſue for it, is called his *taking of their victuals*, Joſh. 9.— the men took of their victuals, *and asked not counſel of the Lord, and Joſhua made Peace with them, and made a League with them to let them live*, Joſh. 9. 14, 15. And *Obadiah* mentions *being in Covenant* with any one, and *Eating Bread* with him, as Words that ſignifie the ſame Thing, whereof the *one* is the *others* Explication. *The men of thy Confederacy have brought thee even to the border*, ſays he, *i.e.* have almoſt quite bereft thee of thy own Country; *the men that are at Peace with thee, have deceived thee; they that eat thy Bread, have laid a Wound under thee*: in which

Description of the Enemies of *Edom*, tho' there be Variety in the Expression, yet is one and the same Thing meant by them, *Obad. v.* 7. And the same might appear from other Instances, both in the *Scriptures*, and in *Prophane Authors*.

Since in the Words of Institution then our Saviour tells his Disciples, the *Cup* is the *New Covenant*, and bids them *drink* of it, which was well known among them to be a *Federal Rite*; he plainly shew'd his meaning was, that they should *ratifie* and *confirm the New Covenant* by it.

2. In the Words of Institution *the Bread* is called *Christs Body* to the same intent, as the *Paschal Lamb* was in the *Jewish Sacrament*: and this also shews it to be a *Covenanting Rite*, because that was a *Federal Conveyance of it*.

The *Bread*, I say, or rather the *taking and eating of it*, is called *Christs Body* to the same Intent, as the *Paschal Lamb* was in the *Jewish Sacrament*. *Jesus took bread*, says St. *Matthew*, *and brake it, and said, Take, eat, * this is my Body*, Mat. 26. 26. Which Words, *This is my Body*, relate to the *Paschal Lamb*, that in the ordinary Phrase of the Doctors was called the † *Body*

* *Not* ὅτι *in the masculine, to agree with* ἄρτον *bread; but* τοῦτο, *which, being of a different gender, cannot agree to* ἄρτον, *but to the whole Action.*

† *Body of the Paſſover*, and *the Body of the Paſchal Lamb*, to ſhew, that the *taking* and *eating* of the *Bread* and *Wine* was to be *his Body* in the ſame ſenſe now, as the *eating of the Paſchal Lamb* had been hitherto. Which Relation to the *Paſſover* that he had then in hand, and to their manner of expreſſing it, I think is one very obvious and natural Account of his calling this *New Feaſt his Body* when he ſpake of it.

† Corpus Paſchatis, & Corpus Agni Paſchalis. *Vt Buxt. obſerv. è Talmud. & Maim.*

And this alſo ſhews it to be a *Covenant-Rite*, becauſe the *eating of the Paſchal Lamb* among the *Jews* was *his Body* in a *Federal* ſenſe, as a *Federal Conveyance* of it. For their *Slain Lamb* was a Figure of our *Dying Lord*, as hath been proved, and was accepted to all the purpoſes of his *Blood*: and their *Feaſting on it*, as in all other *Sacrifices*, was their *Federal joyning* in, and partaking of it. For to *Feaſt on a Sacrifice*, was to joyn in the *Covenant* made by it, and to partake of the Bleſſings promiſed to it, as ſhall preſently be ſhewed.

And ſince in the Words of Inſtitution our Saviour ſays of the *Eating of the Bread* that it is *his Body*, to the ſame intent as the *Eating of the Paſchal Lamb* was

in that Jewish Sacrament, which was so in a *Federal* sense, as a *Federal Conveyance* of it: he plainly intimates his own Supper to be a *Federal Feast*, and that we confirm the *New Covenant* by joyning in it.

And as this appears from the Words of Institution, wherein the *Cup* is called the *New Covenant*, and they are bid to *eat* and *drink*, which is a *Federal Rite*; and the *Eating of the Bread* is called *Christs Body* to the same intent as the *Paschal Lamb* was, which was so in a *Federal* sense, as it *Federally conveyed* it: So doth it also,

2*ly*, From its being a *Feast upon Sacrifice*, which is a *Federal Feast*; for *Sacrifice* is one way of *Covenanting with God*; and by *Feasting on the Sacrifice*, we *joyn* in, and *partake* of it.

The *Lords Supper*, I say, is a *Feast* upon *Sacrifice*. It was the way both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that when they brought an Offering to God, they who offered it were to come, and Feast on some part of it. Thus it was in the *Worship* of the *Golden Calf*, and the *Sacrifice* which *Aaron* made to it, *Exod.* 32: *He built an Altar before it, and offered Burnt-offerings and Peace-offerings, and the People sate down to Eat and to Drink*, *i.e.* upon part of what they

they had offered, *v.* 5, 6. And thus it was in the *Sacrifice* which *Samuel* bleſſed, 1 Sam. 9: *The People will not eat until he come, becauſe he doth bleſs the Sacrifice, and afterwards they eat that be bidden*, v. 13. And to this Uſage ſeveral Places of the *Scripture* allude, as namely *Pſal.* 106. 28. —*they joyned themſelves unto Baal-Peor, and ate the Sacrifices of the Dead:* And *Exod.* 34. 15—*leſt thou do Sacrifice unto their Gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his Sacrifice:* And ſeveral others. And as it was thus in the *Religious Feaſts* both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, ſo it is alſo in the *Lords Supper*. Our Saviour gave his *Body* and *Blood* a *Sacrifice* for our Sins, *putting away Sin*, as the Apoſtle ſays, *by the Sacrifice of himſelf*, Heb. 9. 26. And having thus made the Oblation, according to what was in uſe both in the *Jewiſh* and *Gentile* Sacrifices, he inſtitutes this Treat of *Bread* and *Wine*, as a *Feaſt* upon it. This I ſuppoſe is aim'd at, when St. *Paul* brings in an *Altar* ſpeaking of the *Chriſtian Feaſt*, which ſufficiently intimates its relation to a *Sacrifice*, as a *Treat upon it: We have an Altar*, ſays he, *whereof they have no right to eat that ſerve the Tabernacle, i. e.* wherein the ſtrict Judaizers may not partake; for Judaiſm excludes Men from the Communion eſpecially,

and indeed from all Parts of the Christian Worship, *Heb.* 13. 10. And this he also shews concerning it, when he compares it with the *Jewish* and *Gentile Feasts on Sacrifices*, making them answerable and parallel to it, 1 *Cor.* 10. 16, 18, 20, 21. And this he directly affirms of it, when he says, *Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the* Eucharistical *Feast*, *i. e.* upon this Sacrificed Christ, 1 *Cor.* 5. 7, 8.

And *Feasts upon Sacrifice* are *Federal Feasts*, *i. e.* Feasts that ratifie and confirm Covenants; for *Sacrifice* is *one way of Covenanting with God*, and *Feasting upon it* is the way of *participating* or sharing in it.

Sacrifice, I say, is *one way of Covenanting with God.* When God would enter into Articles, and bind himself in Covenants with Men, he chose to do it in shedding the *Blood* of some *Sacrifice*, that Typified the *Blood of Christ* his *Son*, which is the onely thing that moves him to deal with us in any Concern that either implies or tends to Friendship and Reconciliation. Thus he did with *Abraham* when he promised him the Land of *Canaan* if he would continue † *perfect, and walk* before him; he ordered him to make a *Sacrifice*, that therein he might covenant and

† *Gen.* 17. 1, 2.

and engage it to him. *Take an Heifer*, ſays he, *and a ſhe-Goat, and a Ram, &c. And Abraham took them, and divided them in the midſt, and when the Sun went down, behold a ſmoaking Furnace, and a burning Lamp that paſſed between thoſe Pieces*, wherein, 'tis like, God Conſumed and Feaſted on *Abraham*'s Sacrifice; *and in that ſame day the Lord made a Covenant with Abraham, ſaying, Unto thy Seed have I given this Land, &c:* Gen. 15. 8, 9, 10, 17, 18. And thus he did with the *Jewiſh Nation*, when he ratified that Covenant with them, which *Moſes* gave them; he choſe the *Blood* of *Burnt-offerings*, that therein he might ſeal it to them. For when *Moſes told the People all the words of the Lord, and they anſwered with one voice, ſaying, We will do them; he built an Altar of twelve Pillars, according to the twelve Tribes, and offered Burnt-offerings and Peace-offerings, and* then recited *the Book of the Covenant in their ears*, that they might give their Aſſent to it in the Solemnity of this Sacrifice; the Blood whereof is therefore called *the Blood of the Covenant*, becauſe it was thus ſolemnly entred, and eſtabliſhed by it, *Exod.* 24. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. And thus he did in other Compacts, but particularly in *all thoſe* wherein he promiſed *Pardon of Sin*; *for without ſhedding*

of Blood, i. e. of some Sacrifice, says the Apostle, there *is no Remission*, Heb. 9. 22. Thus did God, in *all Contracts of Pardon* and *Reconciliation*, require the *Blood* of some *Sacrifice*, that therein he might ratifie and confirm them. And this was the great Use whereto *all Sacrifices of Expiation* (such as our *Saviour Christs* is in most signal manner, whereon we *Feast* in the *Lords Supper*) served among the *Jews*: they were *solemn Compacts* and *Stipulations*, wherein *he promised Pardon*, and they *Amendment*, after any Offences. He ingaged to *accept the Life of the sacrificed Beast in lieu of theirs*, and to exempt them because it had suffered; and they engaged to *amend the Fault which they sought to have atoned*, and never more to repeat it. This 'tis plain they did, from that *Form of Penitential Confession* in use among them, when they brought an *Expiatory Sacrifice* to the Lord:

† *O Lord! I have sinned, and dealt wickedly, and rebelled against thee in doing this or that; now I am sorry for it, and ashamed of it, and will never more return to it; and therefore beg this Sacrifice may atone for it.* And if they

† Obsecro Domine, peccavi, deliqui, rebellavi, hoc aut illud feci, nunc autem pœnitentiam ago, sitque hæc hostia expiatio mea. *Vi. Episcop. Instit. l.* 3. *c.*3. *ad Præcep.*35. *& Outr. de Sacr. c.* 15.

they had not thus repented of it, the † Sacrifice would have been of no avail to the Forgiveneſs of it. For, *to what purpoſe is the multitude of your Sacrifices unto me, ſaith the Lord,* ſo long as you ſhew no Repentance with them? But *waſh you, make you clean, ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well: Come now, and let us reaſon together; tho' your Sins be as Scarlet, they ſhall be as white as Snow,* Iſa. 1. 11, 16, 17, 18. *The Sacrifices of God,* ſays the Pſalmiſt, *are a broken Spirit, i. e.* they muſt be offered and preſented with it; *a broken and a contrite Heart, O God, thou wilt not deſpiſe,* Pſ. 51. 17.

† Iſa. 66. 3.

Thus were *Sacrifices* a *mutual Stipulation* and *Engagement*, conſiſting of a *Promiſe of Pardon on Gods part*, and a *Promiſe of Repentance and Amendment on Mans*: ſo that they were in the nature of a *virtual Contract* and *Covenant* between them. And this God plainly intimates concerning them, when he tells of his *Saints* making a *Covenant with him by Sacrifice*: —*Gather my Saints*, ſaith he, *who have made a Covenant with me by Sacrifice*, Pſ. 50. 5. and calls *Salt, wherewith every Oblation of Meat-offering was to be ſeaſoned, the Salt of the Covenant*, becauſe it was to ſeaſon all thoſe Sacrifices wherein the

Covenant was confirmed, *Levit.* 2. 13.

And as *Sacrifice* is *one way of Covenanting with God*, so is *Feasting upon it the way of sharing and partaking in it.* He who joyned in the Feast, was looked upon by God himself to joyn also in the Offering, to *promise* all the *Duty* which it engaged, and to *partake* in all the *Blessings* which it procured for them. *They which eat of the Sacrifices*, says St. *Paul*, *are Partakers of the Altar*, 1 Cor. 10. 18. And therefore he forbids them to joyn in the *Gentile Feasts*, where they *sacrificed to Devils*, because that were *to partake* and *have Fellowship with Devils*, v. 20, 21.

And thus, from this also, *viz.* the *Lords Supper being a Feast on Sacrifice*, it appears to be a *Federal Rite*, because *Sacrifice is the great way of Covenanting with God*, and by *Feasting on it*, *we joyn in and partake of it.* In *eating Bread* and *drinking Wine* at the *Lords Table*, agreeably to what the *Jews* and *Gentiles* did at their *Religious Feasts*, we feed on the *Sacrifice* of *Christ*; and that Sacrifice confirmed the *New Covenant* with Almighty God, that being, as he says, sealed † *in his Blood*, so that by our Feasting on it we are made to share in it, and give our full Consent thereto.

† 1 Cor. 11.25.

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3*ly*, That our Eating and Drinking at the Lord's Table is a Covenant-Rite, appears from *all the particular Bleſſings of the Covenant being conveyed by it*, which otherwiſe than by *Federal Promiſes* and *Performances* are not to be had.

The *Particular Bleſſings* promiſed in the Covenant, I ſay, are all *conveyed* by it. Our Saviour tells us of the *Bread* we eat, and of the *Wine* we drink, that they are his *Body* and *Blood*:—*This is my Body*, ſays he, and *this is my Blood of the New Teſtament*, Mat. 26. 26, 28. By which, altho' we are not to underſtand that they are ſo in their *Natures*, yet the leaſt we can underſtand is, that they are ſo in their *Effects*, *i. e.* that they convey to us all thoſe Bleſſings, which the piercing of his Body, and the ſhedding of his Blood procured for us. Thoſe Bleſſings are contained in the New Covenant, and, as I ſaid, are chiefly theſe *three*, *viz.* the *Forgiveneſs of Sins*, the *Aſſiſtance of Gods Spirit* to aid and ſtrengthen us, and *Eternal Life* and Happineſs: and all theſe the Eating of Bread and Drinking Wine in the Holy Sacrament are deſigned to convey to us.

They convey to us *Forgiveneſs of Sins*, and aſſure us, when we perform them as we ought, that God is in Favour and at

Peace

Peace with us. Of this we have sufficient Assurance, because we *Feast upon a Sacrifice*, which is Gods Meat, and are entertained at his own Table, as *his Guests* whom he has invited: and the least which that can mean is, that he admits us into a State of Love and Friendliness, since we do not invite those we will not be Friends with to our own Tables. When any one calls another to a Treat, it is a plain Sign he either *would be*, or *is*, or at least *makes shew of being* reconciled. It is a most Natural Sign, and *now* every where *is*, and *always was* a Note of Friendship and Endearment. And as such the Scriptures are wont to speak of it. When those whom he *had shut out*, should *knock at the door* to be let in, and claim Acquaintance, our Saviour tells us, they will say to him, *We have eaten and drunk in thy presence*, Luc. 13.25,26. And when he shews his *Apostles* how high Favour, and what great Interest they shall have with him, he tells them, they shall *eat and drink at his Table in his Kingdom*, Luc. 22.29, 30. And when he declares how kind he will be to those *that hear his voice, and open unto him*, he says, he *will come in and sup with them, and they with him*, Rev. 3.20. So that when God entertains us at his own Table, and invites us

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to Feaſt with him, as he doth in the Holy Communion; we may be ſure, if we come worthily as we ought, he is in Friendſhip with us, and our Sins are forgiven. And this our Saviour plainly intimates, when he tells us at the giving of the *Cup*, that it is † *his Blood ſhed for the Remiſſion of Sins*, and bids us * *drink of it*, that ſo we may have it in our ſelves, and be aſſured we have received the Atonement. And this, we muſt obſerve, is a Privilege which God never vouchſafed to the *Jews*, no not to the *Prieſts* themſelves: for in all their *Sacrifices* he would never give them the *Blood of Expiation*, to aſſure them of their Sins being atoned by it, (nay, nor the *Fleſh* neither in the *Great Sacrifice of Expiation*, which *was burnt* † *without the Camp*) but ordered it always to be poured out *upon the Altar*, or *the Ground*, Exod. 29. 12. Levit. 4. 25, 30, 34. And to this, 'tis like, St. *Paul* may have reſpect, when he tells the *Hebrews*, *We have an Altar whereof they have no right to eat, who ſerve the Tabernacle*, Heb. 13. 10, 11.

† Mat. 26. 28.

* ver. 27.

† Lev. 16. 27. Heb. 13. 11.

They convey to us alſo the *Aſſiſtance of Gods Spirit and Grace to aid and ſtrengthen us.* This is intimated by our Savi-

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our Christ, when he calls his Flesh, which all must eat (*i. e.* not in its *Natural Substance*, but in its *Effects*, or those Blessings which were purchased by it) by the Name of *Bread*, which is a thing *that*, as the * Psalmist says, *strengthens mans heart*, and gives Nourishment and Support to us. *I am the living Bread*, says he, *which came down from Heaven: If any man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever; and the Bread which I will give, is my Flesh, which I will give for the Life of the World*, Joh. 6. 51. In the Sacrament we are called to *eat Christs Flesh*, and *drink his Blood* (not in their Natural Substances, as I have hinted, but in their Effects:) and *he that eateth my Flesh and drinketh my Blood*, saith he, *dwelleth in me, and I in him*; and when Christ dwells in any Man, his Spirit dwells there too, so that he cannot want Grace sufficient to assist him, *Joh.* 6. 56. And St. *Paul* alluding to the Power of Wine, whose Natural Vertue is to enspirit and enliven Men, says, That in the Eucharist *we are all made to drink into one Spirit*, *i. e.* we are all made to share in the same Holy Spirit, which is the same to our Souls that a Draught of Wine is to our Bodies, a Principle of New Life, Strength, and Vigour in us, 1 *Cor.* 12. 13.

* Psal. 104. 15.

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They convey to us, laſtly, a *Right* and *Title to Eternal Life* and *Happineſs*. The Bleſſed Sacrament was thought *anciently* to have a peculiar Efficacy in preparing our Bodies for an Immortal State. Thus *Irenæus* ſays of it: * *As the Bread that ſprings from the Earth, after it is bleſſed is not Common Bread, but the Euchariſt, conſiſting of an Earthly and an Heavenly Part*, *i. e.* the Senſible Sign, and the Spiritual Thing ſignified; *ſo our Bodies receiving the Communion, are not now corruptible as they were before, but are put in hope of a Reſurrection.* And St. *Ignatius* calls it † *the Medicine of Immortality, which is an Antidote to preſerve Men from Dying, and give them a Life that is Everlaſting.* And to this, as 'tis not unlike, the Prayer at the giving of the Bread and Wine refers, That they may *preſerve our Souls and Bodies to everlaſting Life*, as it was long

*Quemadmodum enim qui eſt à terra panis percipiens invocationem Dei, jam non Communis panis eſt, ſed Euchariſtia, ex duabus rebus conſtans, terrena & cœleſti: ſic & corpora noſtra percipientia Euchariſtiam, jam non ſunt corruptibilia, ſpem reſurrectionis habentia. *Iren. l. 4. adv. Hær. c. 34.*

† Ἕνα ἄρτου κλάσμα, ὅς ἐστι φάρμακον ἀθανασίας, ἀντίδοτος τοῦ μὴ ἀποθανεῖν, ἀλλὰ ζῆν ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ διὰ παντός. *Ignat. Ep. ad Epheſ.*

long since in the Form of the *Western Church*, and as it is *still* in use amongst *us*. But whatever becomes of that Conceit, *viz. its preparing our Bodies for it*; 'tis plain, that a *Right to Life* and Immortality is conferred by it. *Whoso eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood*, saith our Saviour, *hath Eternal Life, and I will raise him up at the last day*, Joh. 6. 54: and again, *He that eateth of this Bread shall live for ever*, v. 58. And if he had not in express Words declared it, in all Equity and Reason this might most justly have been presumed: For since in this Sacrament God gives us the Body and Blood of his own Son, than which nothing can be dearer to him; we may justly argue as St. *Paul* doth, and say, *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up*, both *for*, and to *us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* Rom. 8. 32.

Thus are all the *Particular Blessings* of the *New Covenant*, which Christs Blood has purchased, and which God has promised and made over in it, conveyed to us in this Holy Sacrament. And since they are so, it must needs be a *Federal Rite*, and a *Solemn Ceremony* of *Covenanting* with God, because otherwise than by *Federal Performances* and *Engagements* they are not to be had. God has suspended

ſpended all theſe Benefits upon our Performance of certain Conditions; ſo that we cannot have them conveyed to us on *his* part, otherwiſe than by undertaking at the ſame time for theſe on *our own*. He will not *forgive* any *Believers their Sins*, unleſs they *repent* of them; nor help them to any *Graces*, unleſs they *endeavour* after them, nor reward them at laſt with *Eternal Life*, unleſs they have *intirely obeyed* him, as we have already ſeen. And therefore whereſoever *thoſe* are beſtowed, *theſe* are either performed, or ſincerely promiſed too.

So that from this Reaſon alſo, it appears, that the *Sacrament* is a *Federal Rite*, and a Ratification of the *New Covenant*, and of our *Baptiſmal Ingagement*; becauſe all the Bleſſings of that Covenant are conveyed by it, which otherwiſe than by Federal Performances or Engagements are not to be had.

And thus we ſee, upon all theſe accounts, that the Sacrament of the Lords Supper is intended not onely for a *Remembrance of the Death of Chriſt*, but alſo for a *Renewal* and *Ratification of the New Covenant* which was purchaſed by it. For ſo much the *General Nature of Sacraments which are Covenant-Rites*, of *Baptiſm which goes hand in hand with it*, and of

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the Passover which preceded and answered to it, do fairly intimate; and so much also the *Words of Institution*, at the Blessing both the Bread and Wine *declare*, and its being a *Feast on Sacrifice infers*, and its *conveying all the Blessings of the Covenant proves concerning it*.

And this is the *second* End of our Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Holy Sacrament; namely, to *renew our Baptismal Vow*, and in most solemn sort to *confirm the New Covenant* with Almighty God. So that when we come to remember our Saviour Christ in this Feast, we must come also to give and receive Engagements with our Blessed Lord, promising that we will believe all his Words, and endeavour after all Virtues, and obey all his Laws, and repent of all our Faults: and then hoping assuredly that his Mercy shall forgive us, his Grace and Spirit assist us, and his Bounty reward us with Eternal Happiness when we do.

But besides these Ends, of its being in *Remembrance of Christ* and his Dying for us, and in *confirmation of the New Covenant* which his Death procured us; there is yet another,

3*ly*, And that is, in *Ratification of a League of Love and Friendship with those Brethren*

Brethren that Communicate with us, and with all others.

Eating and Drinking together at the ſame Table, and joyning in the ſame Feaſt, was always a Note of Friendſhip, and a Profeſſion of Love and Kindneſs among Men. It is the common way of the World to *compoſe Differences*, to *keep up Friendlineſs in Neighbourhoods*, and to *beget Endearment* and *mutual Love in all Fraternities*. And this our Saviour intended it ſhould be among us. He invites us all to eat of the *ſame Loaf*, and to Feaſt at the ſame Table, that we may embrace as Friends, and love as Brethren, and be knit together in the ſame Fellowſhip and Communion. *We being many*, ſays St. *Paul*, *are one Bread, and one Body*; *for* in the Sacrament *we are all Partakers of that one Bread*, which is a firm Bond of Union to make us one alſo, 1 *Cor.* 10. 17. It links us together by the moſt *Powerful Arguments* of our being *Servants of the ſame Lord*, and *Sharers in the ſame Privileges*, and *Members of the ſame Body*, which are all moſt *ſtrong Motives* to Peace and mutual Kindneſs; and beſides all this, by our own *Solemn Covenant* and *Engagement* alſo. For in coming to this Feaſt, we are not onely *excited* to it by mighty Reaſons which ſuggeſt it; but

but are to *Covenant* and Promise Love to all our Brethren, and to plight our Troth for it. And thus the *Primitive Christians* understood it, and accordingly made use of it, whose *Judgment* and *Practice* in this Point were so apparent, that the *Heathens* themselves, who looked any thing into their Religion, took notice of it. For *Pliny* in his Letter to the *Emperour Trajan*, wherein he gives an Account of the *Christians Meetings*, reports their *Communicating* to be a *Religious Compact* and *Combination among themselves, to do no hurt to each other*, but to love as Brethren, and live as Friends together. † *They assemble early in the morning*, says he, *and sing an Hymn to Christ as God; and then bind themselves mutually in* their Sacrament, which is *a sacred Oath, not to commit any wickedness* like a pack of lewd Conspirators; *but to be no Thieves, Adulterers, Injurious, False and Perfidious Persons: and having done these things, and given these Assurances of mutual Honesty and Kindnesses to each*

† Soliti stato die ante lucem convenire; carmenque Christo, quasi Deo dicere secum invicem: Seque Sacramento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne Adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent: quibus peractis morem sibi discedendi fuisse, rur-

each other, they depart home, and meet again at a promiſcuous and Friendly Treat, where they innocently Feaſt together.

ſuſque coeundi ad capeſcendum cibum, promiſcuum tamen & innoxium. *Plin. ep. l.* 10. *ep.* 97.

This then is a *third* End of our Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Holy Sacrament, namely, to be a *Solemn Profeſſion of our Communion* and *Fellowſhip with our Brethren*, and an Engagement of mutual Love and Friendſhip to thoſe who Communicate with us, and to all others. So that when we come therein to remember our Saviour Chriſt, and to confirm the New Covenant with Almighty God, we muſt enter into a League of Love with all our Brethren, and promiſe an inviolable Friendſhip unto them too.

And thus we ſee what is the meaning of Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Holy Communion, and what we muſt intend and underſtand by them, that we may, as the Apoſtle ſays,

* *diſcern the Lords Body in them.* When we Eat Bread and Drink Wine according to Chriſts appointment, we muſt fix our thoughts upon him, and *remember what Love and Friendſhip he had for us*, what *Leſſons, as our faithful Guide and Inſtruc-*

* 1 Cor. 11. 29.

tor,

ctor, he has taught us; what *Commands, as our Lord and Master, he has left with us*; and what *inexpressible Things, as our most Precious Saviour and Benefactor, he has done for us*, in being *made Man*, and leading a *mean* and *necessitous Life*, but above all in *dying a most ignominious* and *painful Death* for our sakes, and that he might purchase us the *Favour of God*, the *Graces of the Spirit*, and *Eternal Happiness*. We must *renew that Engagement which we made when we were Baptized*, and confirm again that *New Covenant* with Almighty God which his Blood procured; professing that we *do*, and *will believe his Word*, and *repent of every Fault*, and *endeavour with his Spirit*, and *obey all*, not *wilfully* transgressing *any* Commandment; that so we may have Right to that *Forgiveness*, *Grace*, and *Happiness*, which upon these Terms he has purchased. And lastly, we must *confirm a League of Love and Friendship with all our Brethren*, professing that we *do* and *will* forgive all that injure us, and be kind to all about us, and never fall into Hatred or cause Difference with any Persons, but be at Peace and live in Charity with all the World. The Bodily Eating is but the out-side, and the least part in this Feast; but the chief thing required is this Spiritual Work

Work and Buſineſs which is to accompany it. So that when our Saviour Chriſt calls us to Eat and Drink at his own Table, he calls us not barely to Feaſt our Bodies, for that is the leaſt thing that he intends; but chiefly and principally to employ our Souls, in remembring him, his Laws and Benefits, and among *them*, above all, that of his Dying for us; in confirming the New Covenant with God, and a Covenant of Peace and Brotherly Love with his Members throughout all Mankind.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the Worthineſs of Communicating in the Sacrament.

The Contents.

To Communicate Worthily, is to do it with ſuch Tempers and Behaviour as are worthy of it, and becoming the Things which are meant by it. The First *End was to remember Chriſt, both,* firſt, *As our Lord and Maſter, which calls for Honour and Reverence in our ſelves, and a Care to maintain his Honour among others. For mindfulneſs of his Commands, and Reſolutions of Obedience.* 2. *As our moſt kind Friend and Benefactor, which calls for Love and an hearty Affection for him. For Joy and Gladneſs in what we receive from him. For Thankfulneſs for all his Kindneſſes, particularly in Dying for us. And as this Death was a Sacrifice for our Sins, the Remembrance of it calls for a deep ſenſe of our own Unworthineſs. An utter Abhorrence of our Sins, which cauſed his Sufferings. A Reſignation of our ſelves to his Uſe, as thereby we are become his own Purchaſe. The* Second *End was to*

confirm

confirm the New Covenant with God which his Blood procured. This calls for Sincerity and Faithfulneſs. A Third *End was to confirm a League of Love and Friendſhip with all Chriſtians. This calls for Peace and Charity to all Perſons, and particularly for Alms to the Neceſſitous. A Summary Repetition of theſe Qualifications. A Belief of theſe Things, which carries us on to theſe Tempers and Performances, is the Faith that makes us Worthy Communicants.*

HAving ſhewn hitherto what is the meaning of Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Bleſſed Sacrament, I proceed now, in the next place, to ſhew *wherein lies the Worthineſs of Doing it.* And this had need be clearly ſtated, not onely becauſe the moſt conſiderable Scruple againſt Communicating lies in it, but alſo becauſe really 'tis a Matter of great account, and there hangs a great weight upon it. *For he that eats and drinks unworthily*, ſays the Apoſtle, commits a Damning Sin, which will deſtroy him, unleſs he repent of it; *he eats and drinks Damnation to himſelf*, 1 Cor. 11. 29; and *is guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord*, v. 27.

Now to *Do this Worthily*, is to *Do it with ſuch Tempers and Diſpoſitions as become it*, and *are worthy of it*. For this Eating and Drinking not being to ſatisfie Hunger, but for Sacred Ends, 'tis fit we come to it with a ſuitable and a Sacred Carriage, and in that conſiſts the Worthineſs of the Uſage. Were it onely a Feaſt on *Common Food*, we ſhould behave our ſelves worthily at it, by *thanking God* for it, and being *Temperate*. But being a Feaſt wherein *Religion* is concerned, and whereat we are to *remember the Death of our Lord*, and to *Seal the New Covenant with God*, and a *League of Love with all the Chriſtian World*; to the doing this worthily, and as 'tis fit we ſhould, there is more required. For we deal very unworthily in *remembring the Death of our Lord*, if we are not *thankful for it*; and in *ratifying the New Covenant* with God, if we are not *ſincere* in it; and in *promiſing Love* to all the *Chriſtian World*, if we are in *enmity* and *hatred*. Theſe Religious Ends muſt be anſwered with a Religious Temper, and a Devout Carriage, and then they are treated as they ought, and as their Worth requires. This is ſignified by ſeveral Copies, which in 1 *Cor.* 11. 27. read not barely, *Whoſoever ſhall eat this Bread and drink this Cup*

Cup * *OF THE LORD UNWORTHILY*; but *whoſoever ſhall eat this Bread and drink this Cup of the Lord UNWORTHILY OF THE LORD, i. e.* in a way unworthy of him, which clearly ſhews the Unworthineſs to conſiſt in the want of thoſe Tempers wherewith 'tis fit our Bleſſed Lord, who is commemorated in it, ſhould be treated. And this the Apoſtle plainly intimates, when he places the *unworthineſs of Eating* in not *Diſcerning*, or rather *Diſcriminating the Lords Body*, and putting a difference between it and Common Food, by a different Carriage and Behaviour at it. *He that eats and drinks unworthily*, ſays he, *eats and drinks Damnation to himſelf* for ſuch unworthy uſage, which lies in his *not diſcerning*, or rather *not* † *diſcriminating the Lords Body*, 1 Cor. 11. 29.

* *Not meerly* πίνῃ τὸ ποτήριον ἢ κυρίου ἀναξίως, *but* ἀναξίως τῦ κυρίου, *as ſeveral MSS. partic.* Coll. Linc. Coll. Nov. *read the place. And this is followed by St.* Ambroſe, *who reads thus* ---biberit Calicem Domini indigne Domino, *v.* 27. *and St.* Chryſoſtom, *who reads thus* ---- ἀλλὰν καὶ πίνων ἀναξίως [τῦ κυρίου] κρίμα ἑαυτῷ, &c. *v.* 29.

† μὴ διακρίνων.

Thus doth a worthy Eating of the Sacrament conſiſt in anſwering its Sacred

Ends with Sacred and ſuitable Carriage and Diſpoſitions. And therefore that we may ſee what Behaviour is worthy of it, 'tis fit we run over thoſe ſeveral Ends, and inquire what Tempers every one of them requires of us.

Thoſe Ends are Three.

1*ſt*, To *Remember Chriſt our Bleſſed Lord* and *Saviour*, and particularly his *Dying for us*; which call for *Love*, *Joy*, *Gratitude*, *Obedient Reſolutions*, and ſuch like Tempers.

2*ly*, To *Confirm the New Covenant* with Almighty God; which is not worthily done by us, unleſs we come to it in *Sincerity* and *Faithfulneſs*, and with *full Purpoſe* and *Performance* of that *Repentance* and *Obedience* which we *profeſs* and *promiſe*.

3*ly*, To *Confirm a League of Love and Friendſhip with all our Brethren and Fellow-Chriſtians*; which requires that we lay aſide all *Envy*, *Hatred*, and *Malicious Thoughts*, and come to it in *Peace* and *Forgiveneſs* of all that have any ways offended us.

If we *Believe* all theſe things which *Chriſt* our Great *Prophet* has revealed to us, and our *Faith* ſhews it ſelf in *theſe Tempers*, and carries us on to *theſe Performances*; we are *Worthy Communicants*, and have

have that *Faith* which will render us welcom Gueſts at the Lords Table, and acceptable to him at all other times.

1*ſt*, One End of our Eating Bread and Drinking Wine at the Lords Supper, is to *remember Chriſt*, not onely as our *Prophet* and *Teacher* (which I do not make a *Diſtinct* Head now, becauſe the *Belief* required to that is exerciſed thro' the whole Action, and falls in at all the other) but as our *Bleſſed Lord*, *Saviour*, and *Benefactor*; and above all his Benefits, particularly to remember *his Dying for us*: and this, to do it worthily, calls for *Love*, *Joy*, *Gratitude*, *Reſolutions of Obedience*, and other ſuch like Tempers.

The Remembrance of any thing abſent, and long ſince paſt, brings it back into our Minds, and gives a ſort of *Preſence* to it. And therefore when things are brought to our Remembrance, they ſhould work upon us, and affect us, as if they were before us. When we remember our Saviour Chriſt then, we muſt bear the ſame Mind towards him, as we ſhould if we ſaw him, and were converſing with him: and that will conſiſt in theſe Things that follow. We muſt *Honour him*, and *reſolve to Obey him*, as he is our *Lord* and *Maſter*; and *Love him*, and *Delight in him*, and *give Thanks to him*, as he

is our *Friend* and *Benefactor*; and *be humbled under the ſenſe of our own Unworthineſs*, and *abhor our own Sins, as they brought him to bleed and die for us*; and *reſign up our ſelves, both Souls and Bodies, to his Uſe, as we are bought with his Blood*, and are thereby become his own Purchaſe.

1*ſt*, In Eating and Drinking in the Lords Supper, we are to *remember Chriſt as our Lord and Maſter*; and to do that *worthily*, we muſt remember him with *Honour* and *Reverence*, and with *mindfulneſs of his Commands*, and *Reſolutions of Obedience*, which are Duties we owe, and ſhould pay to him, were he preſent with us.

1*ſt*, We ought to *remember him our Lord* and *Maſter*, with *Honour* and *Reverence*.

Theſe Tempers *Lordſhip* and *Authority* always call for, whenſoever they are lodged in any Perſons. *A Son honoureth his Father*, ſaith God, *and a Servant his Maſter: if then I be a Father, where is mine Honour? and if I be a Maſter, where is my Fear?* Mal. 1. 6. *Honour the King*, ſays St. *Peter*, and *Servants be ſubject to your Maſters with all fear*, 1 Pet. 2. 17, 18. And *Render to all their Dues*, ſays St. *Paul*, as *Fear* or Reverence *to whom Fear, Honour to whom Honour* is due, *Rom.* 13. 7.

But

But when this Authority is in the *moſt abſolute* and *full Degrees*, and is *joyned with the higheſt Excellencies*, and *tempered with the moſt Endearments*, and *guided by the moſt ſurpaſſing Goodneſs*, as it is in *Chriſt Jeſus*, it calls for them moſt eſpecially. For he is every way wonderfully accompliſhed, and has all thoſe Endowments in their greateſt Perfection, which of right can challenge, or are fit to excite them. For he is *boundleſs in knowledge*, he † *underſtands all things*; and *infinitely* * *wiſe in Counſel*, able to ſuit Means to every End, and bring about every Purpoſe; and *ſurpaſſing in* † *Might*, ſo that he may do what he pleaſes; and * *holy in all his ways*; and † *faithful in all his Promiſes*; and * *juſt* and *equitable in all his Dealings*; and *Glorious in his Divine Eſſence*, being the very † *Brightneſs of his Fathers Glory*, and *the expreſs Image of his Perſon*; and *Supereminent in Power*, having *all* * *Authority in Heaven & Earth* put into his hands: and yet in the midſt of all theſe *Excellencies*, and the height of all this *Great-*

† Joh. 21. 17.

* Iſa. 11. 1, 2.

† Iſa. 9. 6. & Rev. 3. 7.

* 1 Joh. 3. 5.

† Rev. 3. 7.

* Iſa. 9. 7.

† Heb. 1. 3.

* Mat. 28. 18.

neſs, which are apt to puff us up with *Pride* and *Contempt of others*, he is *unſpeakable in* † *Love*, and *wonderful in* **Condeſcenſions*, vouchſafing to leave Heaven, where he was *Equal to God*, and *be made in faſhion of a mean Man*, for our ſakes; and *unwearied in* † *doing Services*; and *moſt prodigiouſly free in Bounty and Kindneſs*, giving his own * *Hearts Blood* to purchaſe *Heaven* and *Eternal Life* for us: for all which *Height of Excellencies*, and *Plenitude of Power*, and *Depth of Love*, he is moſt † *profoundly Reverenced*, and *dearly Prized*, and *highly Exalted* by *Glorified Saints*, and the *pure* and *immortal Angels*. All theſe *adorable Excellencies* are in their utmoſt Perfection in our Lord and Maſter Chriſt Jeſus; and their *Merit* calls for all the *Honour* and *Reverence* which he can poſſibly receive from us. And this accordingly God has expreſly required of us. *He hath committed all Judgment to the Son, that all ſhould honour the Son, even as they honour the Father*, Joh. 5. 22, 23; and *highly exalting him, hath given him a Name*

† 1 Joh. 3. 16.
* Phil. 2. 6, 7, 8.
† Marc. 10. 45. Act. 10. 38.
* Joh. 6. 51. Rev. 5. 9.
† Rev. 5. 11, 12, 13.

Name above every Name, that at the Name of Jeſus every Knee ſhould bow, of things in Heaven, and of things in Earth, Phil. 2. 9, 10. He incomparably deſerves our utmoſt Worſhip and Reverence, and has a moſt abſolute Claim to them; ſo that we muſt needs treat him with the moſt ſubmiſſive and reſpectful Carriage, and ſhould deal moſt unworthily by him, and do what utterly misbecomes us, if we ſhould do otherwiſe.

Thus muſt we Remember our Lord and Maſter Jeſus Chriſt with *Honour* and *Veneration*, if we would do it in ſuch ſort as is *worthy* of him.

Nay, we muſt not onely Honour and Reverence him *our ſelves*, but, if we would deal worthily by him, ſeek to *make him Honourable*, and promote his Honour among *others*. We muſt be ready always to plead his Cauſe, and to vindicate his Precepts, and to ſide with his Servants, and expreſs a juſt Diſtaſte againſt thoſe who tranſgreſs his Commands themſelves (and much more againſt thoſe who ſet up for the Party of Diſobedience, and ſeek to draw in others) who prophane his Ordinances, or lightly and irreverently uſe his Name, or any ways vilifie any Perſon or Thing which he ought to be Glorified and Honoured

in. And this we ſhall be ſure to do, if we have any high Eſteem, and Zeal of Love, and affectionate Concern for him. For when theſe are ſtrong in them, every *Servant* will perform this Office to his *Maſter*, and every *Man* to his *Friend*; they will not ſit ſtill, and tamely hear his Name abuſed, or ſee his Commands ſleighted, his Intereſt oppoſed, his Children or Dependents injured, his Appointments diſparaged, or his Perſon any way traduced or diſgraced, without expreſſing a Diſcreet and well-tempered Zeal in his Cauſe, and concerning themſelves in a ſober and juſt Vindication. This, I ſay, they ordinarily will do, as I am ſure they always ought to do, when they have an high Eſteem for any Man. And if, thro' lowneſs of Spirit, or Cowardiſe of Temper, they draw back from the Trouble or Hazard they are like to run in his Vindication; they are very much wanting to their Friend or Lord, and deal unworthily by him. So that if we would deal worthily by our Friend and Maſter Jeſus Chriſt, we muſt neither diſhonour him our ſelves, nor, if we can help it, at leaſt not without expreſſing our diſlike of it, ſuffer it to be done by others. And therefore to make this Sacramental Remembrance worthy of him,

it

it must not onely be in shewing Honour and Reverence to him our selves, but in a readiness to maintain his Honour, and promote his Interest among others also.

2*ly*, We must Remember Christ our *Lord* and *Master*, with *mindfulness of his Commands*, and *Resolutions of Obedience.*

This is another Temper, which Lordship and Authority over us call for. For the most proper Duty of *Subjects* towards their *Sovereigns*, and of *Servants* towards their *Masters*, is *Obedience*, or a Carefulness to perform whatsoever they injoyn and require of them. *Put them in mind*, says the Apostle, *to be subject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magistrates*, Tit. 3. 1. And *Servants obey your Masters in all things, not with eye-service, but in singleness of heart, fearing God*, Col. 3. 22. And *Why call ye me Lord, Lord*, says our Saviour, *and do not the things which I say?* Luc. 6. 46.

Thus is Obedience the great Duty which we owe to all Masters and Governours that have Authority over us. We must neither forget the Commands they have left with us, nor knowingly transgress them, but carefully call them into our Minds, and conscientiously practise them when we do.

And this we are then especially bound

to,

to, if they are not onely our *Maſters*, but our *Deareſt Friends*, and *Nobleſt Benefactors* alſo. For theſe are Names that add new Bonds, and higher Obligations, which will have a great force ſo long as there is any thing of Ingenuity left in us. And therefore ſince our Bleſſed Maſter Jeſus is not onely our Rightful Lord and Governour, but withal our moſt ſurpaſſing kind Friend and Benefactor, we ought in all Duty and Gratitude to be mindful of what he deſires, and to do any thing that he would have us; and we deal moſt undutifully and unworthily by him, if we do otherwiſe. So that this alſo is another Inſtance of the Worthineſs of this Remembrance, to be mindful of the Laws which he has given us, and to think of them with a Readineſs and firm Reſolution to obey.

Theſe are the things then which muſt render our Remembrance worthy of him under this Relation. When we Eat and Drink in Commemoration of Chriſt our *Lord* and *King*, we muſt *Honour* and *Reverence* him *our ſelves*, and be concerned to *maintain his Honour* and *promote his Intereſts among others*, and be *mindful of the Commands* he has left with us, and *ready and reſolved to obey* them.

2*ly*, In Eating Bread and Drinking Wine

Wine at the Lords Supper, we are to *remember Chriſt* as our *moſt kind Friend and Benefactor*; and to do this worthily, we muſt remember him with *Love of him*, and *Delight in him*, and *grateful Reſentments* and *hearty Thanks* for all the Kindneſſes which we have received from him.

1*ſt*, We muſt remember him our moſt *kind Friend* and *Benefactor* with *Love*, and *an hearty Affection for him.*

This is due to him as he is our *Gracious Lord*, and indeed in every Relation that he ſtands in, ſince in all he is moſt wonderfully winning and obliging. For even there he ſeeks our own Good in every thing he commands us, and treats us with much gentleneſs, and encourages every thing that is well in us, and pities our unavoidable Infirmities, and bears our many and high Provocations with invincible Patience, and ſends Meſſengers of Peace to entreat and ſue for a Reconciliation with us upon any Difference, tho 'tis not his Intereſt but ours, and tho' not he but we are the Offenders; and, when he is forced to puniſh, doth it always with the greateſt reluctance; but when he can take an occaſion to reward, doth that with the greateſt Joy and Chearfulneſs; all which are ſtrangely ingaging, and muſt needs conſtrain all ingenuous

genuous Tempers to be heartily in Love with him.

But our Love is due to him more eſpecially, as he is our *moſt kind Friend*, that loves us as he doth his own Life; and our moſt *noble Benefactor*, who has ſo infinitely obliged us, and done ſuch Kindneſſes for us, as we are not able to expreſs.

He is our *true Friend*, who eſpouſes our Intereſts as his own, and is ſenſible of all our Wants, and pained in all our Afflictions, and rejoyces in all our Joys, and ſeeks to make us ſhare in his own Happineſs, and would part with any thing he has to pleaſe us, nay, give his own Hearts Blood in any Caſe which were worth the while to do us a Kindneſs.

He is our moſt *noble Benefactor*, who has done us ſuch Kindneſſes as are beyond all Expreſſions, having procured for us the Favour of God, the Help of the Spirit, and the aſſured Hope of Eternal Happineſs, when all theſe ſeemed irrevocably loſt, and no ways attainable by us; and when he could not gain them at a leſs Rate, than by laying down his own Life for the Purchaſe.

And theſe are Endearments which paſs all Imagination; they are ſuch Arguments

ments to a reciprocal Love and Kindneſs, as cannot be withſtood by any Man. So that having received all this Love from him, we muſts needs return the ſmall Tribute of Love to him again, or elſe we ſhould be the unworthieſt of any Perſons living.

And this is one Temper which is neceſſary to a worthy Remembrance of ſo *kind a Friend*, and ſo *noble a Benefactor* as we have of our Bleſſed Saviour: We muſt love the Thoughts of him, and be moſt kindly affected towards him, or elſe we ſhall ſhew our ſelves utterly unworthy of him.

2*ly*, We muſt Remember him our moſt Noble *Benefactor*, and the Favours he has done us, with *Joy* and *Gladneſs*.

This is a Temper very neceſſary in us, when we would worthily Commemorate the Receipt of Benefits. For when we rejoyce in them, we ſhew what Rate we put upon them, and how much we are pleaſed in them, and how happy we think our ſelves in that Love which beſtowed them on us. And this will make the Perſon that conferred them think them well placed, and pleaſe himſelf in what he has done, concluding, that we, who are ſo ſenſible of a Kindneſs when 'tis ſhewed us, are worthy to receive one.

And

And therefore the Scripture calls all good Men, who have received moſt invaluable Benefits, to Joy and Gladneſs. *Rejoyce in the Lord, O ye Righteous*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *for Praiſe is comely for the Upright*, Pſal. 33. 1.

And this we all ought to ſhew when we Commemorate thoſe Bleſſings which our Bleſſed Saviour has conferred upon us. He has got all thoſe things for us which our Hearts can wiſh, no leſs than the pure and perfect Joys of Heaven, and Eternal Happineſs; and theſe he has taken the hardeſt Pains, and been at the greateſt Coſt to compaſs, laying down his own Life for them, rather than he would ſuffer us to go without them. And this we ought not at any time to think of, without Joy and Gladneſs. When we reflect upon ſo great Love, and ſuch ineſtimable Benefits, 'tis moſt fit and reaſonable we rejoyce over them, that thereby we may ſhew forth how happy we think our ſelves in them. And our Bleſſed Lord may well think he threw them away upon us, and repent that ever he beſtowed, or took ſuch pains for them, if after all he ſees us inſenſible of what is done, and ſtill as cold and unaffected as if we had received nothing. So that if we would worthily Commemorate the

Receipt

Receipt of ſo great Happineſs, we muſt do it with joyful Hearts, and chearful Looks, and an open ſhew of Gladneſs; as we are told the *Diſciples* did in the *firſt* Days, who, as St. *Luke* ſays, *continued daily in the Temple, and breaking Bread, eating it with Gladneſs of Heart*, Act. 2. 46.

3*ly*, We muſt Remember him our moſt *Noble Benefactor* with *grateful Reſentments* and *hearty Thanks for all his Kindneſſes*, particularly for that of *his Dying* for us.

In *Thankfulneſs* are implied *two* things.

1*ſt*, A *grateful Acknowledgment of the Gift*, and a *Praiſing him that gave it.*

2*ly*, A *Readineſs* and *Endeavour according to our Power to requite it.*

It implies a *grateful Acknowledgment of the Gift*, and *a Praiſing of him that gave it.* For when we receive an undeſerved Benefit, it is very fit that we let the *Donor* know we are ſenſible of it, and underſtand very well both our own Happineſs in receiving, and his Kindneſs in beſtowing it. We muſt give him the Praiſe of his Beneficence, and expreſs a Senſe of our own Obligations: For if we fail in this, we ſhew either that we *contemn his Gift*, and ſet no *value* on it; or that we think it onely a *Tribute to our own Deſert*, ſo as that we are not *beholding* to him for

it;

it; or that we would be *independent*, and are too proud to be obliged by it; all which, had they been known to him before-hand, would have made *him* and *all men* judge us moſt *unworthy* to receive it.

It implies alſo a *Readineſs* and *Endeavour according to our Power to requite it.* For Love ſhould engage Love, and the Kindneſſes which are done us, oblige us upon all Opportunities to do the ſame again. To encourage Benefits and beſtowing Favours, we ought to take care that they who gave them never have any juſt cauſe to repent of them, and to let them ſee, that if we had the Power and Opportunity, we would do as much for them. For Kindneſſes ſhould be a ſort of *Loans*, which, upon any fit occaſion, are to be repaid back to him who ſhewed them, that ſo all Men may be encouraged to abound in them, and never be hindred by a fear leſt afterwards they ſhould be offended with themſelves for having beſtowed them. And if any Man is either ſo *ſtupid*, or ſo *proud*, that he will take no notice of them, nor endeavour afterwards to requite them, by the conſent of all he is unfit to be dealt with in this *generous* way of Love, and is utterly unworthy to receive them.

Thus doth Thankfulneſs imply, both an

an affectionate Acknowledgment of the Gift, and Praiſing him that gave it; and alſo a Readineſs and Endeavour according to our Power to requite it.

And this we owe in the higheſt Meaſure to our Saviour Chriſt, and muſt be ſure always to pay him, when we Commemorate the ineſtimable Benefits which we have received from him. We muſt not remember the great Things he has done for us, in delivering us from Eternal Death, and gaining us the Favour of God, and the Joys of Heaven, when it coſt him no leſs than his own Hearts Blood for the Purchaſe, without affectionate Reſentments, and Mouths full of Praiſe, and a fixt Readineſs and Reſolution of Mind to make what ſmall requital we are able in our Zeal for his Service, and our Kindneſs to his *Brethren*, whom he looks on as his own Members, reſenting any Good that is *done to them, as if it were done to himſelf*, Mat. 25. 40. And this Duty of Thankfulneſs is a moſt eſpecial Requiſite to our worthy Commemoration of his Benefits in this Feaſt. For *Praiſing God* is reckoned as one Particular of the Diſciples Carriage in their *Breaking Bread*, Act. 2. *They continued daily breaking Bread*, ſays St. *Luke*, *which they eat with gladneſs, praiſing God*, v. 46, 47.

Nay,

Nay, ſo great a ſhare has Thankſgiving and Praiſe in this Buſineſs, that the whole Action is called the *Euchariſt*, *i. e.* the Giving of Thanks to God for thoſe Benefits which are therein Commemorated.

And theſe are the Things which muſt render our Remembrance worthy of him, when we Commemorate him as our *Friend* and *Benefactor* in this Holy Supper. We muſt *love* him for his Kindneſſes, and *delight* in his Benefits, and be *thankful* for all his Favours, particularly for that which is therein eſpecially Commemorated, his *Dying* upon our accounts, burſting out into *grateful Acknowledgments* and *Words of Praiſe*, and being *ready* and *reſolved* by our *Zeal in his Service*, our *Obſervance of his Laws*, and our *Kindneſs to his poor Members*, to make him all the ſmall *Requital* we are able, ſo that he may never have any cauſe to repent of what he has done for us.

But beſides this Remembrance of his Friendſhip to us, and *Benefits* in *general*, which require in us theſe forementioned Tempers; we are *eſpecially* to commemorate the *Benefit of his Dying for us*, which more particularly calls for certain others.

In Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Lords Supper, I ſay, we are to remember

remember *his Dying for us*, and ſhedding his *Blood a Ranſom for our Sins*. And to do this worthily, we muſt *be humbled under the ſenſe of our own unworthineſs*, and *abhor our Sins* which brought him to bleed and die for us, and *reſign up our ſelves* both Souls and Bodies to *his uſe*, as we are bought with his Blood, and thereby become his own Purchaſe.

1ſt, We muſt remember his Dying for us in *an humble and deep ſenſe of our own unworthineſs*, and in an *utter abhorrence of our Sins, which brought him to theſe Sufferings*.

We muſt remember it, I ſay, in *an humble and deep ſenſe of our own unworthineſs*. His Death was not for any thing that he had done, but onely for our Sins; and this ſhews what *vile Wretches* we are, and how *unworthy Perſons*. It lets us ſee how *hateful* our Sins had made us unto *God*, and what they had *deſerved* at his Hands. For he would not let them paſs without inflicting the higheſt Shame, and the moſt exquiſite Pain and Tortures. Yea, when his own onely Begotten Son would intercede for them, and bear the Burden of them in his own Perſon, ſo implacable was the Hatred he had to them, and ſo indiſpenſable the Reaſons that conſtrained him to puniſh them, that his

his moſt tender Love for him, whom he valued as his own Right Eye, could not hinder but that he ſhould bleed and die for them. It lets us ſee alſo how *troubleſom* they had made us to our *beſt Friends*, and how *ſhamefully burdenſom* and *expenſive* to the *Bleſſed Jeſus*. For when he long'd and labour'd to redeem us from them, he could not be *our* Friend unleſs he would ceaſe to be *his own*, nor do us any good at all, except he would give his own Life a Ranſom. And what Man now can ever think of this, but he muſt hide his Face, and be quite buried in a ſhameful ſenſe of his own Unworthineſs? He may ſee how vile he was, when God was ſo highly offended with him, and thought no Puniſhment too heavy for him, and would not be reconciled at the Interceſſion of his own Son, unleſs he would die in ſtead of him; and it was ſo dangerous and coſtly a thing, no leſs than the laying down his own Life, for his Saviour to ſhew himſelf a ſerviceable Friend to him. And if this Sight doth not work ſhame and ſelf-abaſement in him, he will be concluded by all to be the baſeſt Man alive, and utterly unworthy that ever any thing of all this unparallell'd Kindneſs ſhould have been done him.

We

We must also remember his Dying for us with *an utter abhorrence of our Sins, which were the Causes of his Sufferings.* For if we do not hate and abhor them, when we consider what Tortures he endured for them, we shew we are very little concerned for his Ease, nor have any feeling of his Pains, nor any Zeal at all against the Occasion of his Sorrows. And this is a very bad Requital of his undergoing all those Pains for our sakes, and a most unworthy Usage. So that if we would worthily Commemorate his Dying for us, we must be humbled and ashamed of our selves, at the sense of our own Unworthiness, seeing we had deserved such insupportable Punishments, and have put him to such exquisite and intense Pains; and particularly we must turn our abhorrence on our Sins, which caused all this Mischief, and made him, if he would befriend us, to undergo such heavy Tortures.

2*ly*, We must remember his Dying for us, with a *Resignation of our selves*, both *Souls* and *Bodies*, *to his use*, *as we are bought with his Blood*, and *thereby become his own Purchase.*

He died in our stead, and his Blood was given to God for a *Ransom*, to buy us off from it, that we might not die also.

The

The Son of Man, ſaith he, *is come to give his Life a Ranſom for many*, Mat. 20. 28. And ſince he has bought us, and paid ſo dear for us, to deliver us from Hell-torments and Eternal Death, which is not *his*, but *our own* Advantage; in all Equity and Reaſon he ought to have the Uſe of us, and we ſhould be wholly devoted to his Service. And this the Scripture requires of us. *The Love of God conſtrains us*, ſaith St. *Paul*, to live to him, *becauſe we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, but unto him that died for them*, 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15. And again, *Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a Price; therefore glorifie God in your Body and in your Spirit, which are Gods*, 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. And ſince his Dying for us has made us his own Propriety, and acquired him an abſolute Right over us to his own uſe, which we had infinite Reaſon to deſire, but he had no need of; if we would remember it *worthily*, we muſt do it *juſtly*, by honeſtly devoting our Souls and Bodies, and aſſigning them over to him, to be wholly at his Service.

And theſe are the Things which muſt render our Remembrance worthy of him, when in the Holy Sacrament we Commemorate

morate his Dying for us, and ſhedding his moſt precious Blood a Ranſom for our Sins. We muſt be *humbled* with the ſenſe of our own Unworthineſs, and *abhor our Sins*, which brought him to theſe Sufferings, and *reſign up our ſelves*, both Bodies and Souls, to be wholly at his uſe, and employed where and in what he pleaſes, as thereby they are become his own Purchaſe.

And thus it appears what Tempers are becoming us, and worthy of this *firſt* End of Eating and Drinking in the Holy Sacrament, *viz.* the *Remembrance of our Lord and Saviour Chriſt*, *and his Dying for us*. We muſt remember him with *Honour* and *Reverence*, with a *careful Concern to maintain* and *promote his Honour* among others, with *mindfulneſs of his Commands*, and *Reſolutions of Obedience*, as he is *Lord* over us: with *Love* of him for his Kindneſs, and *Delight* in his Benefits, and *thankful Acknowledgments*, and *Words of Praiſe*, and *grateful Returns*, in any thing he can receive, or we can give, for *all* his Favours, particularly his *Dying on our account*, as he has ſo *highly befriended*, and *infinitely obliged* us; and with an *humble ſenſe of our own unworthineſs*, and an *utter abhorrence of all our Sins*, which were the Cauſes of his Suf-

ferings, and an *intire Resignation of our selves*, both Souls and Bodies, to his use, to be employ'd as his own Purchase in what he pleases, as his Death was a *Sacrifice* for our Sins, wherewith he bought and redeemed us. All these are Duties, which, were he now before us, and conversing with us, we ought to pay him; and which therefore in our Remembrance of him, which makes him present to our Minds, we must not deny him: and in them consists the Worthiness of this Remembrance and Commemoration.

2ly, A *second* End of our Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Lords Supper, is to *confirm the New Covenant with Almighty God which Christs Death procured:* And to do this *worthily*, we must come to it in *Sincerity* and *Faithfulness*, and with *full purpose* and *performance* of that *Repentance* and *Obedience* which therein we solemnly *profess* and *promise*.

We must come to it, I say, in *Sincerity* and *Faithfulness*. The great Qualification which is requisite in all Compacts, is *Faithfulness*. For they are the great Means of Security among Men, and the great Thing which, in their Expectations from each other, they have to depend upon: and therefore it is both *pretended*, and *expected* by all that make them, that they

they will not prove falſe and deceitful in them. Every Man that Covenants, expects thoſe he Contracts with ſhould mean what they profeſs, and perform what they promiſe; and makes ſhew alſo himſelf, that he will do ſo likewiſe. And if he doth not, he is a very diſhoneſt unworthy Man, ſuch as the *Goſpel* condemns, and will ſentence, unleſs he repent, to eternal deſtruction: *Covenant-breakers* being ranked among thoſe who *in the Judgment of God are worthy of Death*, Rom. 1. 31, 32.

And this *Sincerity* or *Faithfulneſs* conſiſts in this, that we come in *full purpoſe* and *performance* of that *Repentance* and *Obedience* which we *profeſs* and make *promiſe* of. In this Covenant, to all us *Believers*, God *offers at preſent* a *Right to Pardon*, his *Holy Spirit*, and *Eternal Happineſs*; and we again *profeſs*, and make offer to him of our *Repentance* and *Obedience*. And this Right *he promiſes* ſtill to *continue* to us upon the ſame Terms; and anſwerably *we promiſe* to perform them upon that expectation for ever afterwards. And both in theſe *Profeſſions* and *Promiſes* we muſt deal ſincerely with him, and neither pretend a preſent offer of them, when we want them; nor make Promiſes of them for the time to come,

when we have no fixed Deſign and well-weighed Reſolution to perform them.

When we come therefore to renew our *Baptiſmal Engagement*, and to confirm the New Covenant with Almighty God, giving him both the *Profeſſion* and the *Promiſe* of *theſe Duties*, and receiving from him the *Proffer* and the *Promiſe* of *theſe Graces*, we muſt be hearty and unfeigned with him. Our Souls muſt really be acted by that Repentance which we profeſs, and fully intend to make good that Obedience which we promiſe. And if we perform in both theſe, we are *faithful* and *ſincere* in this Buſineſs; but if we fail in either, we are *Diſſemblers* and *Hypocrites*, who *act a Part*, and go to impoſe upon Almighty God, which is a very *unworthy* part of us.

And this Sincerity God expreſly calls for at this Feaſt, and requires us to be faithful with him when we come to confirm the New Covenant by partaking of it. *Chriſt our Paſſover*, ſays St. *Paul*, *is ſacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the Feaſt, not with the Leaven of Malice and Wickedneſs*, by adhering ſtill to our former wicked ways, which therefore we are to repent of, *but with the unleavened Bread of Sincerity and Truth*, 1 Cor. 5. 7, 8. And as for *Repentance* particularly, which

which is the great Condition of the Covenant renewed in it; it is the great Qualification of all worthy Receivers, and is moſt indiſpenſably required in this Sacrament. It is the chief thing that is looked at in *every Confirmation of the Covenant*, and therefore is ſo peremptorily † called for when we are *Baptized*: it is the only thing that can * *recommend a Sacrifice*, and therefore the main point that muſt fit us for *this Feaſt upon it*. And this the Ancient Church always thought of it; as it plainly ſhew'd, when at the Celebration of it the Biſhop cry'd out, † *Theſe Holy Things muſt be taken only by Holy Perſons*; and as St. *Ambroſe* clearly informs us, when he ſays, * *This is the Order of diſpenſing this Myſtery which every Church obſerves, that firſt upon their true Repentance their Sins may be forgiven them, and then this Heavenly Food ſhall be adminiſter'd and reach'd out to them.*

† Act. 2. 38. Luc. 3. 3.

* Pſal. 51. 17.

† ὁ ἐπίσκοπος προσφωνήσατω τῷ λαῷ ὅτι τὰ ἅγια τοῖς ἁγίοις. Conſtit. Apoſt. l. 8. c. 13. p. 484. tom. prim. Concil. Ed. Par. Lab.

* Ubique myſterii ordo ſervatur, ut prius per remiſſionem Peccatorum vulneribus medicina tribuatur, poſtea alimonia menſæ Cœleſtis exuberet. S. *Ambroſ. Comment. in Luc. l. 6. c. 9.*

As this Eating and Drinking then is a Federal Rite, and in Confirmation of the New Covenant, it requires that we be Faithful and Sincere in doing it; and then we come worthily, and partake of it as we ought, when we truly *Repent* of all our Sins, as we profess, and are *fully purposed*, as we promise, at all times after so to do.

3*ly*, A third End of our Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Lords Supper, is, to *confirm a League of Love and Friendship with all Christians*: and this requires that we lay aside all *Envy*, *Hatred*, and *Malicious Thoughts*, and come to it in *Peace* and *Forgiveness* of all that have any ways offended us.

We must not come to it in *Envy*, *Hatred*, and *Malicious Thoughts*; for that were to give the Lye to our selves, and to contradict our own Professions. For when we come there to partake of that *one Bread*, we profess our selves, as has been shewn, to be all *one Body*, and that we are all the *Body of Christ*, and *Members one of another*. We solemnly declare, that we will be friends from that day forwards with all persons, and fully reconciled even to our bitter Enemies, and those who have given us the highest Provocations, though not for their own sakes,

ſakes, yet for the ſake of Chriſt, who has bore a thouſand times more from us, and deſerves infinitely beyond what this comes to at our hands. We promiſe mutually that we will lay aſide all little Piques, not fall out into Quarrels or Contentions, nor bear Ill-will, or be vexatious among our ſelves, nor ſeek our own Pleaſure, Honour, or Advantage at our Brethrens loſs; but that we will all have a compaſſionate ſenſe of each others Infirmities, and a tender concern and diligent care for each others welfare; that we will live as Members of the ſame Body, which all feel what befalls any, and are all ſolaced with the ſame Joys, and all languiſh in the ſame Sorrows, and all unite in the ſame Ends, and all bear the Weakneſſes, and ſupply the Needs, and ſeek the Good and Pleaſure of each other, as they do their own. All this Goodwill and Brotherly-kindneſs, Peace and Forgiveneſs towards all Perſons, we profeſs in eating together at this Feaſt; and therefore it is moſt unworthy dealing if we want them, and are even then acted by Hatred, Envy, and malicious Thoughts, which are moſt oppoſite and contrary to them.

Thus is it neceſſary when we confirm this League of Love and Friendſhip to

our Brethren, that we lay aſide all Envy and Ill-will, and have perfect Charity towards all men. And this Charity muſt be ſhewn, as in *Prayers* and *Good wiſhes* at *all times*, and in *Courteous Carriages* and *good Offices* as oft as we have *opportunity*, towards *all Perſons*; ſo particularly in *giving Alms*, and affording Relief to ſuch as *want* and are *neceſſitous*. For the League of Love whereinto we are then to enter, and which Chriſt exacts of us, is not only to beſtow *fair words*, or *compaſſionate looks*, or *faint wiſhes*; but, if we are able, to *relieve* as we have opportunity, and ſupply thoſe who ſtand in need of our ſubſtance. *If a Brother or a Siſter be naked*, ſays St. *James*, *or deſtitute of daily Food; and one of you ſay unto them, Depart in Peace, be ye warmed or filled, notwithſtanding ye give them not thoſe things which are neceſſary for the Body, what doth it profit?* Jam. 2. 15, 16. *My little Children*, ſaith St. *John*, *let us not love in word* only, *neither in Tongue, but in deed and in Truth: And hereby, i. e.* by this uſeful operative Charity, *we know that we are of the Truth, and ſhall aſſure our hearts before him*, 1 Joh. 3. 18, 19. And thus the *Ancient Chriſtians* conſtantly uſed to do in the Apoſtles times. For then at every Lords Supper, they had another of their own,

own, which they call'd a *Love Feaſt*, or *Feaſt of Charity*, Jud. 12. This conſiſted of ſuch Proviſion as every Communicant brought along with him; they that were *Rich* brought in much, and the *Poorer* ſort leſs, but when it came, they all ſate down in a Brotherly way, and ſhared in common. Which when the *Corinthians* failed to do, every one eating as they came without tarrying for their Brethren, and the Rich taking their own large Portions to themſelves, and leaving the Poor to bluſh at the ſcantineſs of theirs; the Apoſtle reproved them ſharply, telling them how much they prophaned this Holy Feaſt by ſuch corrupt uſage. *In eating*, ſays he, at this Feaſt, inſtead of joyning all like loving Brethren at a common Supper, *every one taketh before other his own Supper*, or that which he brought for his own ſhare, *and one*, who brought little, *is Hungary* through his ſcarceneſs, *and another*, who brought much, *is Drunken* with the exceſs of his. *Shall I praiſe you in this? I praiſe you not.* 1 Cor. 11. 21, 22. And when this way of being Charitable to the Poor at this Feaſt, by reaſon of abuſes crept into it, was laid aſide; another was ſtill uſed, which to this day is practiſed in many and the beſt of our Churches, as 'tis fit it ſhould in all, and that is, ha-

ving *offerings for the poor* at every Communion, which may afterwards be distributed among them. Which is a most proper way, and excellent opportunity, not only of exercising that Charity which therein we profess to them; but also of expressing our Thankfulness to our Blessed Saviour, for the invaluable benefits we have received from him. For in being thus kind to his poor Members, whom he is so tenderly concerned for, we make some sleight return and poor requital unto him, who puts their Receipts upon his own score, taking what we do to them as done to his own Person. *In as much as ye have done it unto these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.* Mat. 25. 40.

And these are the things which must render our eating and drinking, as it is in *Confirmation* of a *League of Love and Friendship with all our Brethren*, worthy of that signification. We must lay aside all *Envy* and *Malicious Thoughts*, and come to it in *Forgiveness* of all that have offended us, and in *Charity* to all our Neighbours, which we must express, as in other things, so particularly in *giving Alms* to such whose necessities require it of us.

And all these the *Scripture* it self marks out as necessary Qualifications in all *worthy Communicants*. *Let us keep the Feast*, says

ſays the Apoſtle, *not with the Leaven of Malice*, 1 Cor. 5. 8. *When ye come together into one place*, ſays he again, *I hear there be Diviſions among you: And*, when there are ſo, *this is not to eat the Lords Supper*, one End whereof is to unite you, 1 *Cor.* 11. 18, 20. *If thou bring thy Gift to the Altar*, ſays our Saviour, *and there remembreſt that thy Brother hath ought againſt thee, leave thy Gift before the Altar, and go and firſt be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift*, Mat. 5. 23, 24. And as for the *Diſtribution of Alms* at this time; that, as we ſaw, was the *Apoſtolical* way in the *Love-Feaſts*, as alſo in the *Collections for the Poor as every Man had laid by him in ſtore* on the *Firſt day of the Week*, (when they always had a Sacrament) which St. *Paul* mentions 1 *Cor.* 16. 2. And when theſe Feaſts fail'd, yet theſe Collections and Offerings at the Lords Table ſtill continued, and do in very many Places, which in this reſpect are fit to be Patterns to all others, unto this day.

And thus at laſt we ſee wherein conſiſts the *Worthineſs* of Eating and Drinking in this Holy Feaſt, and what Tempers and Diſpoſitions in us are worthy of all thoſe Ends which are ſignified and deſigned by it. We muſt Eat and Drink in *Remembrance*

brance of Chriſt, and of his *Dying for us*, with *Honour* and *Reverence*, with a *careful Concern to maintain* and *promote his Honour* among others, with *mindfulneſs of his Commands*, and *Reſolutions of Obedience*, as he is *Lord* over us: with *Love* of him for his Kindneſs, and *Delight* in his Benefits, and *thankful Acknowledgments*, and *grateful Returns for all his Favours*, particularly his *Dying on our account*, as he ſo highly *befriended*, and *infinitely obliged us*: and with an *humble ſenſe of our own unworthineſs*, and an *utter abhorrence of all our Sins*, which were the Cauſes of his Sufferings, and an *intire Reſignation of our ſelves*, both Souls and Bodies, *to his uſe*, to be employed as his own Purchaſe in what he pleaſes, as his Death was a *Sacrifice for our Sins*, wherewith he bought and redeemed us. We muſt Eat and Drink in *confirmation of the New Covenant*, profeſſing our hearty Conſent to it, and Reſolution to ſtand by it, in all *Sincerity* and *Faithfulneſs*; coming to it with that *Repentance* of all our Sins, and thoſe *obedient Hearts* which we *profeſs*; and with a *full purpoſe* afterwards to make good all we *promiſe*. And, laſtly, we muſt Eat and Drink in *confirmation of a League of Love and Friendſhip with all our Brethren*, laying aſide all *Envy* and *Malice* towards

towards them, and making *Reſtitution* where we have wronged them, and *forgiving* heartily where we have any Grudge againſt them, and giving *Alms* as our Ability and their Neceſſities require them, and ſo being in perfect *Peace* and *Charity* with all Men.

And if we *believe all theſe things*, and are thereby carried on to *all theſe Tempers* and *Performances*, we have that *Faith* which will render us *Worthy Communicants*, and acceptable to God at all other times. If we *believe Chriſt* to be our *Lord* and *Maſter*, and thereupon *Reverence*, *Honour*, and *Obey him*; if we *believe* him to be our beſt *Friend* and *Benefactor*, and thereupon *love* him, and *delight* in him, and are *thankful* to him; if we *believe he ſhed his own Hearts Blood for our Sins*, and for the *Redemption* of our Souls, and thereupon are *humbled with the ſenſe of our own unworthineſs*, and *abhor our Sins* which were ſo miſchievous, and *reſign* up both our Souls and Bodies *wholly to his uſe*, as they are his own *Purchaſe*; if we *believe* his *Death* procured us the *Grace* and *Bleſſings of the New Covenant*, which promiſes all *Believers Pardon upon Repentance*, and the *Spirits Help upon their own Endeavours*, and *Eternal Life on their intire Obedience*; and thereupon

heartily

heartily consent to it, and perform that *Repentance* and *Obedience* which are the Condition of it, and are *faithful* and *sincere* in our Promises and Resolutions to stand by it: and lastly, if we *believe* he requires us to *love*, and *live in peace* with all the World, and thereupon in this Sacrament *confirm a League of Friendship with all our Brethren*, laying aside all *Enmity* and *Hatred*, and being in perfect *Charity* with all Men: If we have all this *Faith*, I say, which, as appears, is thorowly exercised in this Sacrament; and can shew all these *Fruits* of it, in these Tempers and Performances being effected by it; we have that *true*, *saving*, *justifying Faith* the *Scripture* speaks of, which *purifies the Heart*, Act. 15. 9, and *works by Love*, Gal. 5. 6, and is *lively in Good Works*, Jam. 2. 20, 26; and this will make us *Worthy Communicants* at this Feast, and welcom to God at all other times.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

A further Account of this Worthiness.

The Contents.

These recited Tempers are all necessary in the Person Communicating, but not all necessary to be expresly exercised in the Time of Communion. A Direction in which it may be fit to lay out our Devotion at that time. All these are provided for in the Churches Prayers, so that we may exercise them worthily if we go along devontly at all the Parts of the Communion-Service.

IN the *former* Chapter I have reckon'd up those Tempers which render us *Worthy Communicants*, and fit us to be bidden Welcome at the *Lords Supper* whensoever he invites and calls us thither.

But of them I must observe, that altho' they are *all necessary in the Person Communicating*; yet are they *not all of necessity to be particularly* and *expresly exercised in the Time of Communion.*

They are *all necessary*, I say, *in the Person Communicating*, and he is not worthy to

to *remember* ſuch a *Lord* and *Saviour*, to *ſign the New Covenant with Almighty God*, and a *League of Amity* and *Friendſhip with all the Chriſtian World*, who wants any of them. They are altogether *due* from us, as we have ſeen, and may in all reaſon be *expected* of us, as we ſtand in theſe *Relations*, and are admitted to theſe *Employments*: So that we act *unworthily*, and fail of our Duty, if our Souls are not endow'd with them, when we are in thoſe Capacities, and about thoſe Performances, which do ſo juſtly challenge and call for them.

But they are *not all neceſſary to be particularly* and *expreſly exerciſed in the Time of Communion*. They will be all *implied*, 'tis true, and *virtually contained* in what is then done; but they are not all neceſſary to be *particularly inſiſted on*. And for this there is a very good Reaſon, becauſe that Time doth not ordinarily allow ſufficient Space for them. For moſt Communicants are not of ſuch active Minds and quick Apprehenſions, as that they can purſue ſo many Buſineſſes, or work themſelves up into an expreſs Fervour of ſo many particular Tempers at one Exerciſe. And thoſe that are, chuſe rather often-times to fix upon ſome few, that ſo, having the more

more time to ſtay upon them, they may raiſe themſelves up to greater Degrees, and act them over in much higher Meaſures. And becauſe, where all cannot be exerciſed, it is of great uſe to know which are beſt and fitteſt to be ſingled out, I ſhall here ſet down which of all thoſe Tempers I conceive it were moſt proper to ſtir up at that time, and vigorouſly to exert and heighten in our own Minds.

If any then, who come to the Holy Communion, find that they are either *tired out* with the *length*, or *diſtracted* by the *variety* of *many* Particulars, and that their Devotion in this Feaſt goes better on, and is more full and perfect when they reſtrain it to a *few*; I think they may do well to lay it out in theſe that follow.

In *remembring* our Saviour Chriſt, who, as then we are to believe, *died* for us, and purchaſed us the *New Covenant* by his Death, offering us the Pardon of our Sins upon Repentance, and his Grace and Spirit to help out our Endeavours, and Eternal Life upon our intire Obedience: in remembring him, I ſay, we may do well to ſhew,

1. A *joyful* and *affectionate Thankfulneſs* for this his unſpeakable Love and Benefits,

nefits, particularly for his Dying for us.

2. An *intire Reſignation of our ſelves*, both Souls and Bodies, *to his uſe*, as they are his own Purchaſe: In which *two* conſiſts the main Worthineſs of this Part, they being the Things which are moſt becoming us in this Remembrance.

And in *confirming the New Covenant* with Almighty God, whereto we muſt believe we are then invited, we may act,

3. *Repentance of all our Sins*, particularly of all thoſe which we find are moſt apt to win upon us; and *make him Promiſes* that in all the Inſtances of Duty, but in them eſpecially, we will joyn our Endeavours to his Grace, and obey his Laws: and when we promiſe this, it muſt be with a *ſincere* and *faithful* Heart, and with full Intentions of Performance, which are the great Duty incumbent on us in theſe Engagements.

And in *confirming a League of Love* and *Friendſhip with all our Brethren*, which we muſt think we are then called to likewiſe, we may exerciſe,

4. *Charity towards all Perſons*, forgiving all that have any ways offended us, and laying aſide all Envy, Strife, and malicious Thoughts, and reſolving to ſhew Kindneſs both in Word and Deed

to

to all about us, nay to all Men, as we have ability and opportunity, but the *Poor* eſpecially, who ought not to be forgotten at ſuch times; which is the Great Thing required of us, and becoming us in this part of the Service.

So that when we come to the Holy *Communion*, where we are called to *remember Chriſt*, particularly in his *Death*, to *ſeal the New Covenant with God*, and a *League of Friendſhip with our Brethren*; we may do well to expreſs our ſelves *joyfully* and *affectionately thankful* for all his Kindneſs, eſpecially that in Dying for us, and *reſign up our ſelves*, both Souls and Bodies, to his Service, and *repent of all our Sins*, making him faithful and unfeigned Promiſes of amending all our Faults, particularly thoſe wherein we are moſt liable to do amiſs, and ſhew our ſelves in *Peace* and *perfect Charity* with all Perſons. By theſe things we ſhall duly anſwer the Ends of this Feaſt, and in them lies the great Worthineſs of our Carriage at it. And this our *Church* has ſufficiently intimated to us in her *Publick Catechiſm*, when in return to that *Queſtion*, *What is required* of them that come to the Lords Supper? It gives this *Anſwer*; To *repent them truly of all their Sins, ſtedfaſtly purpoſing to lead a new Life; to have a lively Faith*

Faith in Gods Mercy thro' Christ (which, as we have ſeen, is thorowly exerciſed from the *beginning* to the *end* of this Holy Sacrament) *to have a thankful Remembrance of his Death, and be in Charity with all Men.*

When we come therefore to the Holy Sacrament, whilſt the *Miniſter* himſelf is Communicating, or whilſt *others* are Receiving, we may lay out our ſelves on theſe things, and ſpend the time in the Exerciſe of theſe Duties, acting them in Devout Prayers and Holy Meditations in our *own Hearts*. Or if we are not able of our ſelves, but need the Help of others to ſuggeſt Thoughts, and to go along with us in this Service, let us joyn heartily in the *Churches Prayers*, which it has appointed for this purpoſe. For in them we have an Exerciſe of all theſe Virtues, and they have excellently provided for our Needs in this Caſe; ſo that we may duly expreſs theſe Tempers, if we are careful to joyn fervently with the Miniſter in all the Parts of the *Communion-Service*. And becauſe it may be of uſe to ſome to ſee how all theſe Duties are exerciſed in it, that ſo, being aware of it, they may particularly deſign them when they come to it; I will ſhew it of them all particularly.

1. It

1. It leads us on to an *affectionate Thankfulneſs* and *joyful Praiſe*, the *firſt* great Qualification, in a ſtrain which truly to me is moſt tranſporting. For thus it helps us to give Thanks *before* Receiving. *It is very meet, right, and our bounden Duty, that we ſhould at all Times, and in all Places, give Thanks unto thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlaſting God: Therefore with Angels, and Archangels, and all the Company of Heaven, we laud and magnifie thy Glorious Name, evermore praiſing thee, and ſaying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hoſts, Heaven and Earth are full of thy Glory: Glory be to thee, O Lord moſt High.*

And thus again *after* it:

Glory be to God on High, and in Earth Peace, and Good Will towards Men. We praiſe thee, we bleſs thee, we worſhip thee, we glorifie thee, we give Thanks to thee for thy great Glory, O Lord God, Heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.

O Lord the onely Begotten Son Jeſu Chriſt, O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takeſt away the Sins of the World, have Mercy upon us. Thou that takeſt away the Sins of the World, have mercy upon us. Thou that takeſt away the Sins of the World, receive our Prayers. Thou that ſitteſt at the Right Hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.

For

For thou only art Holy, thou only art the Lord, thou only, O Chriſt, with the Holy Ghoſt, art moſt high in the Glory of God the Father.

All which are words expreſſing *joyful Praiſe* and *affectionate Thankfullneſs* ſo meltingly, that better, I think, have not yet been thought of.

2. It leads us alſo to *reſign up our ſelves*, both Souls and Bodies, *to his Service*, in the Prayer immediately *after* receiving in theſe words.

And here we offer and preſent unto thee, O Lord, our ſelves, our Souls and Bodies, to be a reaſonable, holy, and lively Sacrifice unto thee; humbly beſeeching thee, that all we who are partakers of this Holy Communion, may be fullfill'd with thy Grace and Heavenly Benediction.

3. It leads us in profeſſing an *humble* and *hearty Repentance of all our ſins*, and making God our *Faithful Promiſes of new Obedience*, in the *invitation* to Communicate, and the *Confeſſion* of Sin *before* receiving in theſe words.

Ye that do truly and earneſtly Repent you of your Sins, and intend to lead a new Life, following the Commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his Holy Ways; draw near with Faith, and take this Holy Sacrament to your Comfort, and make your humble

humble Confeſſion to Almighty God, meekly kneeling upon your Knees.

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, &c. *We acknowledge and bewail our manifold ſins and wickedneſs, which we from time to time moſt grievouſly have committed, by Thought, Word, and Deed, againſt thy Divine Majeſty*, &c. *We do earneſtly Repent, and are heartily ſorry for theſe our miſ-doings*, &c.

And to prepare us for this profeſſion of Repentance in *this place* of the Service, I think it very adviſeable to take what time there is, whilſt the Bread and Wine are in preparing before the *beginning* of the *Office*, to recollect our *particular* Sins which we are moſt liable to incur, and at *every one* of them to make God promiſes, and fix Reſolutions of amending them in our own minds; after which we may the better ſay in *General* we *Repent* of them, and will no more Commit them, and thereupon beg *Pardon* for them, and receive *Abſolution*, as it is in this part of the *Service*.

4. And laſtly, it leads us to act *Peace* and *Charity* to all men, when in the *Exhortation before* receiving, it tells us we muſt *be in perfect Charity with all Men*; and in the *invitation*, calls ſuch as *are in Love and Charity with all their Neighbours*: at which

which words our hearts may ſtrike in with it, and earneſtly profeſs they at *preſent* are, and are fully reſolv'd at all times *after* ſo to be.

Thus doth the *Church* it ſelf in our *Publick Service*, go before us, and lead us on in theſe great Duties of *joyful Praiſe* and *Thankfulneſs*, of *Reſignation of our ſelves*, of *Repentance* and *Faithful purpoſes* and *promiſes of Obedience*, and of *Charity to all Perſons*, which are to render us welcome Gueſts, and worthy Communicants. Nay, it doth not only call us to, and bear us Company in theſe *chief Duties*, wherein above all conſiſts a *Receivers worthineſs*: but alſo in *moſt others* mentioned above, ſo that ſcarce any Duty is requir'd in us at this Feaſt, but, if our Hearts go along with it, it puts in act, and makes a place for it.

It exerciſes our *humble ſenſe of our own unworthineſs* in the Prayer *before Conſecration*, in theſe words. *We do not preſume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, truſting in our own Righteouſneſs, but in thy manifold and great Mercies. We are not worthy ſo much as to gather up the Crumbs under thy Table.* And ſo again in the Prayer *after receiving* in theſe. *Though we be unworthy, through our manifold ſins, to offer up unto thee any Sacrifice; yet humbly we beſeech*

ſeech thee accept this our bounden Duty and Service; not weighing our Merits, but pardoning our Offences, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

It exerciſes our *hatred* and *abhorrence of our Sins*, which cauſed Chriſts Sufferings, in the *Confeſſion of Repentance* in theſe. *The remembrance of our miſ-doings is grievous unto us, the burden of them is intolerable.*

And it exerciſes our *Love*, and *Reverence*, and *Honour to Chriſt*, either in *words* that *expreſs* it, or in *things* that *imply* it, being *real* proofs and effects of it, in every thing that is done through the whole Service.

If every Receiver therefore that *has* theſe Tempers, doth but *go along heartily* and *affectionately* with the *Churches Prayers*, and joyn with the *Miniſter* and the *Congregation* in the *Communion Service*; he acts them over as he ought, and doth Honour to his Saviour, and is a worthy Communicant. He ſhews all thoſe qualifications which God has required, and receives as a worthy Gueſt, if he can do nothing more than go along, and ſtrike in heartily at every part of the *Publick Worſhip*. Which I ſpeak, not for the eaſe of thoſe who, either by their *own invention*, or the *help of Books*, can ſet their

own Minds on work, and employ their own Thoughts in meditating and acting over all these Tempers, whilst the Minister is distributing the Sacrament: I speak it not, I say, for the ease of these Persons, as if, beside what they do in the Churches Prayers, they should not moreover do what they can otherwise. But for the sake of others, who have not these abilities, that they may not be discouraged; and to let them know, that, if they are good men, and *have* these Tempers, there is *exercise* of them sufficient in the *Publick Prayers*, were there nothing else from the help of *Books*, or their own *invention*, to make them *worthy Communicants*.

And thus we see wherein lies the *worthiness of receiving*, and what Virtues are fit for him to exercise, who would be a welcome Guest at the *Holy Communion*. When he *remembers the Death of Christ*, and *confirms the New Covenant with God*, and a *League of Love and Friendship with all the Christian World*, by *eating Bread*, and *drinking Wine* according to Christs appointment; he must exercise himself in *joyful Praise*, and *affectionate Thanks*, and *Resignation of his whole man*, both Soul and Body, *to Christs Service*, and in *Repentance of all his Sins*, making God faithful Promises

miſes of New Obedience, and in *Charity towards all Perſons*: all which he may expreſs in joyning heartily with the *Churches Prayers*, beſides what he doth, whilſt the Bread and Wine are in preparing, or whilſt others are Communicating, in his *own Meditations*. And if he believes theſe things, and is carryed on by ſuch belief to theſe Performances; he is welcome to the Table of his Lord, and may juſtly eſteem himſelf a worthy Partaker of this Bleſſed Sacrament.

CHAP. IV.

Worthy Receiving not extraordinary difficult, and of unworthiness to Communicate.

The Contents.

To silence the Complaint of extraordinary difficulty in coming worthily to this Sacrament, three things noted. 1. *All the particulars of worthy Receiving, are necessary parts of Duty, and of a good Man; so that no more is required to fit us for receiving, than is required to fit us to dye, or to go to Heaven.* 2. *They are all necessary Qualifications of an acceptable Prayer, Vow, or Thanksgiving; so that no more is required to it, than to a worthy discharge of all other Acts of Religion.* 3. *However they may be commended, yet are they not necessarily required in more intense, and transporting degrees in it, than in other instances of Devotion. The only unworthiness, which can put us by this Ordinance, is Impenitence: if Repentance will go down with any man, nothing else need*

need ſtick with him. This Point of Worthy Communicating ſumm'd up.

HAving hitherto ſhewn wherein lies the *worthineſs of receiving*, and what thoſe Qualifications are which fit us for this Holy Feaſt: I ſhall now only note ſome things that *may ſilence all good mens Complaints about the hardſhip of it*, and *ſhew plainly who are unworthy to join in it*, and *what they muſt do to fit and prepare themſelves for it*, and ſo conclude this Point.

1*ſt*, I ſhall Note ſome things that *may reconcile all good minds to this Feaſt*, and *ſilence their Complaints of the hardſhip, and extraordinary difficulty of coming worthily to partake in it.* And this had need to be done, and may prove of great uſe when once it is; becauſe one *chief* thing, which cauſes even *good People* to come ſo *ſeldome*, is the *apprehended difficulty*, and *extraordinary ſolemnity* of the *worthy receiving*.

Now to ſatisfy all good Souls in this point, and to remove theſe hard thoughts of it, I would ſuggeſt to them theſe *three* things.

1ſt, That *all theſe Tempers, which are required to a worthy Communion, are neceſſary parts of Duty, and of a good Man; ſo that no more is required of us to fit our ſelves for receiving, than is required to fit us to dye, or to go to Heaven.* 2*ly*, That

2*ly*, That *they are all required to a worthy Prayer, Vow, or Thanksgiving; so that no more Duties are required to our worthiness in it, than to our worthiness in all other Acts of Religion.*

3*ly*, That *however they may be commended, yet are they not necessarily required, as some have imagined, in more intense and transporting degrees in it, than in other instances of Devotion.*

1*st*, I say *all the Tempers*, which I have mentioned as *necessary to a worthy Communion*, are *necessary parts of Duty, and of a good Man; so that no more is required of us to fit our selves for a worthy receiving, than is required to fit us to Dye, or to go to Heaven.*

They are *all necessary parts of Duty, and of a good Man.* It is necessarily required of every good Man, who would serve God and be accepted with him,

† Phil. 2, 9, 10. that he † *honour his Lord* and Master *Jesus Christ*, and be

* Luc. 6. 46. careful to * *obey* him; that

† Jam. 1. 12. he be † *affectionately sensible* of *all the kindnesses* he has done, particularly in *dying* for him, and most heartily

† Eph. 5. 20. † *thank* him for them; that

* Mat. 5. 3. he be * *humbled* under the sense of his own sins, and

† Prov. 8. 13. utterly † *abhor* them; and

resign

reſign up himſelf both † Soul and Body, to his Saviours uſe, who by his own hearts blood has bought him; that, having *firſt* † *Believed in Chriſt*, he *ſincerely conſent* and enter into the *New Covenant*, *performing*, and *promiſing* that † *Repentance*, * *Good endeavours*, and † *Obedience* which are required by it, in expectation of that *Forgiveneſs*, *Grace*, and *Happineſs* which are propoſed in it; and laſtly, that he ſhould † lay aſide all *envy*, and *malicious Thoughts*, and * *forgive Injuries*, † *repair Wrongs*, be at * *Peace*, and live in † *Charity* with all the world. All theſe are Duties indiſpenſably required by the *Goſpel of Chriſt*, as appears by the places referr'd to in the *Margine*; they are no indifferent things, but abſolutely neceſſary in every *Chriſtian*, who would ſecure his Peace with God, and be ſure at laſt to go to Heaven. And they, as we have ſeen, are the very things, which the Worthineſs of Communicating conſiſts of. So ſo that to be *perſonally worthy* for the Communion, is *nothing more*, than to be an acceptably

† 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20.
† Marc. 16. 16.
† Luc. 13. 3.
* Phil. 2. 12.
† Heb. 5. 9.
† Gal. 5. 20, 21.
* Mat. 6. 15.
† Ezek. 33. 14, 15.
* Rom. 12. 18.
† Col. 3. 14.

ceptably Good and Religious man: To have all those Virtues which constitute a *Saint*, and are necessary parts of that Obedience and Holy Living, which must get us all an *Interest in Christ*, and secure our *Title* to Salvation. And therefore if any man is contented with those Duties, which God exacts of him to make him a good Man; he has no cause to complain of those, which are necessary to a worthy Receiving. And if he doth repine at them, and refrain from the Lords Table, because he will not be at the pains to acquire them; 'tis plain that 'tis not the *hardship of the Sacrament*, but of an *Holy Life* that he is disturbed at; and the same difficulties that drive him from the *Communion*, if he understand himself, must drive him also out of his *Religion* and the *way to Heaven*.

2ly, *These Duties*, that are required to a *Worthy Receiving*, are required also to *every Worthy Prayer*, *Vow*, and *Thanksgiving*; so that *no more Duties are required to our worthiness in it, than to our worthiness in all other Acts of Religion*. For unless a man *Repents of all his Sins*, and is *in Love and Charity with all his Neighbours*, and *Believes in Christ and all his Promises*, and is *ready and resolv'd to obey all his*

his Commandments; and, in one word, unleſs he is a *Good man*, which fits him for a worthy receiving; he is not more worthy to *ſay his Prayers*, to *give Thanks*, to *make Vows* to God, or *ſeal Covenants*, than he is to join in the Holy Communion.

He is not more worthy to *ſay his Prayers*; for to the acceptance of them all the ſame things are required of him. *If I regard Iniquity in my heart*, ſays the Pſalmiſt, *i. e.* if I do not *Repent* of it, and turn away from it, *the Lord will not hear me*, *Pſal.* 66. 18. And if *men* would *pray* as they ought, ſays St. *Paul*, and as they may hope to be heard, they muſt have both *Faith*, *Peace*, and *Innocence* to recommend their Petitions, or *lift up holy hands*, *without wrath*, *and doubting*, 1 Tim. 2. 8. *If you forgive not men their Treſpaſſes*, ſays our Saviour, *neither will your Heavenly Father forgive your Treſpaſſes*. So that *when ye pray ſay——forgive us our Debts*, *as we forgive our Debtors*, *Mat.* 6, 12, 14. God ſays the ſame of an *ill mans Prayer*, that he doth of an *ill mans Communicating*, namely, that he is moſt *unworthy* in both, and ſhall receive a *Curſe* inſtead of a *Bleſſing*. For as the *Unworthy*, *i. e.* as has been ſhewn, the *Wicked Receiver* (the Worthineſs required being only that of a good man) *eats and drinks his own Damnation*,

1 Cor. 11. 29. So is it ſaid of the *Unworthy*, *i. e.* of the *wicked Petitioner* too, that *he who turns away his Ear from hearing the Law*, even *his Prayer ſhall be an Abomination.* Prov. 28. 9. and 15. 8.

Thus is every man, that is *Unworthy to receive the Sacrament*, *Unworthy* alſo to *pray to God*, the ſame things being required to both of them: an *Impenitent ill man*, being utterly unfit for *both*, but a truly *Penitent Good Man*, being ſuch as he accounts *worthy*, and moſt affectionately invites to them.

Nay he is not only unworthy to *pray to God*, but alſo whilſt that *impenitence* laſts, to *give him Thanks*, to *make Vows*, to *Covenant with him*, or to have any Entercourſe and Communication in any *other* actions of *Religion*. If he tells God he is *Thankful* for his Mercies, whilſt in the conſtant courſe of his Life he diſobeys him; his Actions plainly give the Lye to his Words, and proclaim him a moſt *Ungrateful* Perſon. If he *makes him Vows* and *Promiſes*, and *Covenants to Repent of all his Sins*, whilſt he ſtill *lives Impenitent*, and goes on in them; he only ſpeaks him fair, intending no ſuch thing, and therefore doth nothing elſe but *abuſe* and *provoke* him. He doth nothing that Honours God as it ſhould, ſo long as he is an ungodly

godly man, nor muſt hope in any Services or Religious Performances to be own'd and accepted by him. For God will have nothing to do with ill men in any way, whilſt they continue impenitent in their ſins; Chriſt has purchaſed no Reconciliation for ſuch, nor will he, till they change that courſe, have any Friendſhip for, or take any Complacence in them. He will hear the Prayers, and accept the Thanks, and truſt the Promiſes and Engagement of thoſe only, who are fully reſolv'd to amend their Lives, and become Good men; ſo that if any man perſiſts impenitent, which unfits him for receiving, he is alſo unfit for every thing elſe, and unworthy to perform any other Actions of Religion.

As for this buſineſs of *worthy Communicating* then, there is no more cauſe of Complaint againſt *it*, for the *difficulty* and *hardſhip* of it, than there is againſt *all Religion*. The ſame Duties that are required to a worthy Receiving, are no leſs required to make any of us a Good man, to confer a Right to Heaven, to a worthy Prayer, Promiſe, or Thankſgiving. So that if any Man will not come to the Sacrament, becauſe he is wicked, and will not be at the pains to attain thoſe Vertues which are neceſſary to a worthy Com-

Communion: if he understand himself, he must for the same reason keep back from Prayer, and Praises, and all pretences to Religion. For unless he will labour after these Duties, and perform them, he is unmeet to come to God, and is very unworthy in all of them. And therefore so long as he is *unfit for the Sacrament*, he is *unfit for every thing else*, and, if he resolves to continue so, may as well resolve to renounce his *Baptism*, and the whole *Christian Profession*.

And as these Tempers, which are required to a worthy Communion, are no more than is required in every Good man, in every worthy Prayer, Praise, or other act of Religion: So is it to be observed,

3*ly*, That however they may be commended, yet are they not necessarily required, as some have imagined, in more intense and transporting Degrees in it, than in other instances of Devotion.

That which has deterr'd good People from the Sacrament, more than any thing besides, is *their too awful Sense and Veneration of it*, and *placing it at too great a distance from other parts of Worship*. They think no Virtues are worthy of it, but what are expressed in *Ecstasie* and *Transport*; and that when it requires the same Duties with other parts of God's Service, it requires

quires them in *much greater Perfection*, and *far higher Measures*. So that they imagine they may be worthy to Pray, and Praise God, though they are unworthy to Communicate; and therefore they joyn in *them* ordinarily as there is occasion for them, when, through the excess of Reverence, they scarce ever joyn in *this* at all.

But this is a great Mistake, which, though it be well meant, has a very ill effect, and affrights good Souls from Performing this Duty and Service, and paying this Honour to their Saviour, when they have no cause to be afraid of it. For although it be *commendable* and *desirable* when it can be had; yet is it not *absolutely necessary* that so it should be.

It is *very Commendable*, I say, *and much to be Desired, that we should exercise these Tempers in a higher Degree in this Holy Sacrament, than in other Parts of Worship.* It will be very well if our *Prayers* are more *fervent*, and our *Praises* more *affectionate*, and *all the Virtues* we have place to exercise, more *full* and *flagrant then*, than at *other* times. For there we have *Christs Death* represented, with the *hainousness of our sins* which caused it, and the *inestimable Benefits* that come by it; and we meet on purpose, to fix our Thoughts and

and Contemplations on it. And that is the Consideration which gives greatest Force, and adds most Strength to all our Duties; so that when we have *most* of it, as we must have when we come for that very intent, it very well becomes us for the Honour of it to excell in them. And upon this account it will be very Commendable, and much to be Desired, that we should be more vigorous in all our Virtues at *this*, than at any *other* Ordinance.

But although this *be Commendable*, and *much to be Desired in us*; yet is it not *necessary*, or *indispensably required of us, but that we may Communicate worthily when 'tis otherwise.* For if we have these Tempers in *such a Degree*, as is *necessary to our Eternal Happiness*; we have so much of them as will render us worthy and welcome Guests at *this*, as well as at *every other* Ordinance.

And this is plain from hence, because when we have them in a *saving Degree*, which would procure our acceptance in other parts of Gods Service; they fit us for the Communion of *Christ*, and *Glorified Saints in Heaven*; and so cannot leave us unworthy to Communicate with *him* and *them* here on *Earth*. If we *savingly repent us of all our Sins*, and are *savingly thankful for all Christs Mercies*, and are *savingly*

vingly in Charity with all our Neighbours, and have a *saving Faith in Christs Promises*; whether these Vertues be the pitch of the *Strong*, or only of the *Weak in Faith*, we are accepted with him, since he accepts both. And when once he accepts us, we may approach to him in any Place; when he allows of the measure of our Graces, we may be welcome to shew them forth, and offer a Sacrifice of a sweet smell, when we send them up to him in *any*, or in *all* the Parts of his Worship and Service.

Let a man come then to the Communion, though it be without any thing of *extraordinary* and unwonted Transports, and only in that *ordinary* exercise of these Virtues, which gains him acceptance in *Prayer*, or *Praise*, or *other Religious Actions*; and then let him not doubt, but that, although more were better, yet is this good, and will render him a worthy Partaker of the Lords Supper.

And this we have great cause to believe the *Ancient* Christians thought, because they made it not an *extraordinary* and *separate thing*, as we do now, but an *ordinary* and *constant part of the Christian Worship*. It went usually along with the other Parts of the Service, and they that came to *Prayers*, came also to the *Sacrament*;

ment; the *ſame Preparation*, and the *ſame Perſons* being admitted to it. Thus in the *Apoſtles* times, they met to *Communicate*, as they met to pray *every Day*; and *breaking Bread*, was no leſs conſtant a part, than *Prayer*, and *Praiſe*, of their *Communion* and *Fellowſhip*. All *the Diſciples* at *Jeruſalem*, ſays St. *Luke*, *continued ſtedfaſtly in the Apoſtles Doctrine and Fellowſhip, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayers*, Act. 2. 42. And again, *They continuing dayly with one accord in the Temple, and breaking Bread from houſe to houſe, did eat their meat with gladneſs, and ſingleneſs of Heart, praiſing God*, v. 46, 47. And afterwards, when their Members increaſed, and *Stated Days* were appointed for the publick Service of God; on the *firſt day of the Week*, when they met for other Worſhip, the Communion always went along with it. Thus 'tis plain it was in the *Apoſtles* Days, for then the *Sunday Worſhip* was expreſſed by *breaking Bread*, which ſhews it was an *ordinary* and *conſtant part* of it. *On the firſt day of the Week*, ſays St. *Luke*, *when the Diſciples came together to break Bread*. *Act.* 20. 7. And thus alſo it continued for a good while afterwards, as is evident from the Ninth of the *Apoſtolical Canons*. And to ſhew how fit they eſteem'd *all the Faithful*, whether *Weak* or *Strong*

Strong in Faith, who were worthy to joyn in other parts of Worſhip, to joyn alſo in this; that *Apoſtolical Canon* requires all the *Faithful*, who come to the other Service, to ſtay the Communion, and joyn in that alſo †. *All the Faithful, that come to Church and hear the Scriptures, but ſtay not to joyn in the Holy Communion and the Prayers for that Service, ought to be ſeparated and ſhut out from the Lords Table, as they that bring Confuſion into the Church.* And the like is alſo injoin'd in the *Council of* Antioch. * *All that come to Church,* ſay they, *& hear the Scriptures, but do not Communicate in the Peoples Prayers, but turn away diſorderly from the Euchariſt, ſhall be Excommunicated and expell'd the Church, and not received again, till they confeſs their Fault, and ſhew Repentance for it.*

† Πάντας τὺς ἱσιόντας πισὺς, καὶ τῶν γεγραμμένων ἀκόυοντας, μὴ παραμένοντας δὲ τῇ περσευχῇ, καὶ τῇ ἁγίᾳ μεταλήψει, ὡς ἀταξίας ἐμποιοῦντας τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ ἀφορίζεσθαι χρὴ. Canon. 9. Can. Apoſtol.

* Πάντας τὺς ἰσιόντας εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, καὶ τῶν ἱερῶν γεγραμμένων ἀκόυοντας, μὴ κοινωνοῦντας δὲ εὐχῆς ἅμα τῷ λαῷ, ἢ ἀποστρεφομένους τὴν ἁγίαν μετάληψιν τῆς εὐχαριστίας κατά τινα ἀταξίαν, τέτους ἀποβλήτους γίνεσθαι τῆς ἐκκλησίας, ἕως ἂν ἐξομολογησάμενοι, καὶ λίξαντες καρπὺς μετανοίας. Concil. Antioch. Can. 2.

And

And thus we see, however Commendable it may be, that People come to this Holy Sacrament with more Intense Acts, and higher Preparation, than would serve to any other parts of Worship; yet is it not necessary they should do it. They may be welcome and worthy Partakers in this Ordinance, who are worthy to partake in others; so that they are fit for it, who are fit for any other Religious Service. The *same Virtues*, and the *same Degrees* suffice to it. For they fit them to Communicate *with Christ* and *Glorified Saints in Heaven*, and so must needs fit them to Communicate with him, and *them* here *on Earth*. They fitted Christians for it in the *Apostles times*, when the *Eucharist* was no *extraordinary* and *separate*, but an *ordinary constant part* of the *Christian Worship*. For then not only they whose Virtues were most *high* and *perfect*, but *all the Faithful* were call'd upon to Communicate, and they who were judg'd fit to meet at the Prayers and other Services, were thought worthy to meet at the Lords Table too; and since they fitted *them* for it in those Days, it cannot be thought but that they must needs fit us in ours also.

As for those then who have been wont to

to think more hardly of the Sacrament than of other parts of Worſhip, and, how frequent ſoever they were in them, to come but ſeldome unto it, by reaſon of the apprehended difficulty in a worthy partaking of it: If they duly conſider theſe *three* things, they will ſee cauſe to change their mind, and forbear to complain any more againſt it. For *the Virtues that are required of us in a worthy Communion, are all neceſſary parts of Duty, and of a Good Man*; and *are as much required to a worthy Prayer, Vow, Thankſgiving, and every other act of Religion*; and *are not neceſſarily required in more intenſe and tranſporting Degrees in it, than in other inſtances of Devotion.* So that no Good man has any cauſe at all to repine at it, or abſtain from it; it lies hard upon, and can be blamed by none but thoſe, who, for the ſame Reaſon, muſt blame every other Ordinance and part of Divine Service, which requires as much of a worthy Worſhipper as this; and who, at the ſame Rate, as they caſt off it, muſt renounce their Chriſtianity, and throw aſide all Religion too.

And thus having noted ſome things, that may help to reconcile all Good minds to this Bleſſed Sacrament, and ſilence the Complaints of hardſhip in a worthy

worthy receiving it: I ſhall proceed now 2*ly*, To *ſhew plainly who are unworthy of it*, and *what they muſt do to fit and prepare themſelves for it*, and ſo conclude *this Point*.

Now theſe, in one word, are *all that are impenitent, that have committed any Damning Fault, and are not fully ſet and purpoſed to amend it*. For all the Virtues of worthy Receiving, as we have ſeen, are neceſſary parts of Duty, and of a Good man; ſo that if any Perſon would *Repent* of all his breaches of them, and take care thenceforward to endow his Soul with them, he would be worthy to be entertained at this Feaſt, and fit to be bidden welcome. Beſides, if *Repentance* and *forſaking all his Sins* will go down with him, there is no man who pretends to Religion, but may perform every thing elſe, which is required to this Communion. For there would be no great difficulty in *paying Chriſt Honour* and *Reverence*, and *following him with Love* and *Thankfulneſs*, and *reſigning our ſelves up to his uſe*, and *abhorring of our Sins*, if *Repentance* and *Reformation* were not annexed to them; men could *Love Chriſt heartily*, and *Thank him freely*, and *Honour him abundantly*, and *reſign themſelves up to him wholly*, and *Believe in him chearfully*,

if

if he would not peremptorily require them to *amend their ways*, and *forſake their ſins*, which are the things they place their chiefeſt Pleaſure and Delight in: So that if any man will not fit himſelf for Receiving, it is not for the difficulty of other Duties, as if he could not brook them, but only for the difficulty of Repentance, ſo that *Impenitence* is truly at the bottom. He will not *ſatisfie thoſe who have ſuffered by him*, or *forgive thoſe who have injured him*, or be at *Peace and Charity with all Men*, or *renounce that Injuſtice, Laſciviouſneſs, Drunkenneſs*, or *other known ſin*, which, in confirming the *New Covenant*, he muſt *promiſe God he will depart from*: It is becauſe his Heart ſticks to ſome of *theſe*, or ſome *other* ſuch like Tranſgreſſions, and will not go off from them, that he is an unfit and unworthy man; whereas, were it not for this, he could do all things elſe that are required of him.

He therefore, that is unworthy to Communicate, and unfit to receive the Sacrament, is plainly one that is *impenitent*; that is guilty of ſome Damning Sin, and is not reſolv'd to leave, but intends ſtill to continue in it. He is either a *careleſs man*, that lives at large in a conſtant courſe of *Senſuality* and *Worldlineſs*, being wholly given to *heap up Wealth*, or

aim

aim at Honour, or *follow Pleasure without Conviction*, or making any pretence to serious Religion: Or, if he seems to look towards God, and is careful in *many* things to please him, he serves him not in *all* points as he ought, but allows himself in *some known Sin*, continuing unreclaimed in *common Swearing*, *Drunkenness*, *Uncleanness*, *Malice*, *Contentiousness*, *Fraud*, *Oppression*, *Slander*, *Censoriousness*, *Evil-speaking*, or some other Damning Crime, which he will not be at the pains to leave for Christs sake, or for any thing that he either *has*, or *would do* for him.

Now if any of those, who read this Treatise, are such as these, and I put the matter to their *own Consciences*; I confess they are not worthy to come to the Sacrament till they turn away from such a known Fault, and Repent of it, and would sin against this Holy Feast and their own Souls if they should do it. But then I must tell them withall, that as they are not fit to come to this Ordinance, so, whilst they continue in that Estate, neither are they fit to come to any other, or to any thing else that looks towards God, and their own Eternal Happiness. For so long as they thus espouse *any Number*, or *any one Sin* against God, and daily repeat it when they have a Temptation to it,

it, notwithstanding their own Hearts are sensible he has forbid it, or at least would have been sensible of it, unless they had been willfully blinded, or by long use harden'd in it: So long, I say, as they are thus *Impenitent in any known Sin*, they are not only *unfit to come to the Communion*, but also as *unfit to Dye*, or *to go to Heaven*, *to Pray to God*, *to utter Praise*, to *make Vows*, or *to joyn in any other actions of Religion*. For an *Impenitent* man, whilst he continues such, is Gods *Profest Enemy*, and is welcome to him at no time but when he *Repents*; so that till that is done, he is acceptable in no Service which he pays him.

This then is the danger of their State, who lye Impenitent in *many*, or in *few* known Sins: they are unworthy indeed to receive the Communion; but they are equally unworthy to joyn in Prayers, to give Thanks, or make Vows, or dye in Peace, or hope for Happiness, or do any thing else that shews them to be Christians.

And if any mans Conscience tells him this is *his State*; his way is not to think there is no harm, if he doth but *abstain from the Communion*; for, as I say, he is as unworthy in his Prayers, and Praises, and every thing else that belongs to Religion:

ligion: but *forthwith to Repent*, and *amend that Fault* which ſhuts him out from the Sacrament, and every thing elſe that looks towards Heaven, that ſo he may be a worthy and welcome Gueſt in *it*, and all of them. This Repentance will reſtore him to the Favour of God, and gain him acceptance with him; and then he is fit for this, and for every other part of Gods Worſhip, and may worthily joyn in them.

And by this it appears who is unworthy of this Feaſt, and what he muſt do to fit and prepare himſelf for it. Every man that is Impenitent, is an Unworthy Communicant; but if he will Repent and Amend his ways, he will find no difficulty in other Duties which make up a Believers worthineſs, but may then be a worthy and welcome Gueſt whenſoever he has a mind to come to it.

And thus I have done with the *Second* thing I propoſed, namely to ſhew *wherein lies the worthineſs of Eating and Drinking at this Feaſt*; which I have ſtayed the longer upon, becauſe both the *irreverent approach* of ſome men to it, and the *ſcrupulous abſtaining* of others from it, do both take riſe from this head, ſo that it well deſerves to be carefully Explained and clearly Stated. And the Reſult of all

all that I have ſaid upon this Point is this:

When we come to *Eat Bread* and *Drink Wine* at the *Lords Table*, in *remembrance that Chriſt dyed for us*, and in *Confirmation of the New Covenant which his Death procured us*, and in *Ratification of a League of Love and Friendſhip with all our Neighbours*; we muſt be careful *devoutly* to *Exerciſe*, and Act over *theſe Tempers*. We muſt *remember our Dying Lord*, with *Honour*, and *Love*, and *Joy*, and *Thankfulneſs*, and *Reſignation of our ſelves*, both Souls and Bodies *to his Service*, and *humble Senſe of our own unworthineſs*, and *Deteſtation of our Sins* which cauſed his Sufferings. We muſt *confirm the New Covenant* which his Death purchaſed, in *conſenting heartily to the Terms of it*, *Repenting of all our Sins*, and *Faithfully promiſing that intire Obedience* which is required in it, and then *Believing* that for *Chriſts ſake* we ſhall be *ſaved* by it. And we muſt *Confirm a League of Love* and *Friendſhip with all the Chriſtian World*, in laying aſide all *Envy* and *Hatred*, and *forgiving thoſe that have injured us*, and making *juſt amends to thoſe who have been wronged by us*, and *giving Alms* as our Ability and our Brethrens neceſſity requires, and ſo being in *Peace* and *Perfect Charity with all Perſons*.

If we are able to graſp ſo many par-

ticulars in our minds, and to act them all over duly, and as we ought, at this Exercise; it may be fit to Solemnize this Feast in *all these* instances of Virtue. But if either our minds would be lost and burdened, or our Devotions enfeebled by the *Number* of these particulars; 'twill yet be fit at least to express our selves *Joyfully* and *affectionately Thankful for his kindness*, especially in *Dying for us*, and *Resign up our selves* both Souls and Bodies *to his Service*, and *Repent of all our Sins*, making him Faithful Promises that we will amend all our Faults, particularly those which oftest win upon us, and shew our selves in *perfect Peace* and *Charity with all Persons*.

All these, whilst the Bread and Wine are in preparing, or whilst others are Communicating, they who have *Books* to suggest Thoughts, or are able to supply them out of their *own minds*, may exercise by themselves. And they who cannot, as also they who can, may exercise them in joyning fervently with the *Churches Prayers*, all these Duties, as we have seen, being so well led on and exemplified in the *Communion Service*. Wherein, because there will be some interruption whilst others are Communicating, that that time may not lye idle upon

on their hands, I think it very adviſeable for them to joyn heartily in the Prayer which is made at the offering of the Bread and Wine to their Brethren, (as they will be ſure to do when it comes to their own turn) if their Devout Zeal is not otherwiſe taken up by the *Pſalm*, which, at their *Paſtors* Diſcretion, is wont to be Sung at that time for the employment of thoſe who have done Receiving.

Theſe Virtues being in us, and, at the time of Receiving, being thus exerciſed by us, both in our *own private*, or at leaſt in our *Devout Concurrence with the Churches Prayers*, make a *worthy Communion*.

And this no man who pretends to Religion ought to *Complain* of, or think an hard Impoſition. For all *theſe Duties*, which are neceſſary to a *worthy Communion*, are as neceſſary to make every one of us a *Good man*, or *fit to Dye*, or to *go to Heaven*; they are as neceſſary to a *worthy Prayer*, *Thanksgiving*, *Vow*, or *any other Act of true Religion*; and are *not neceſſarily required in more intenſe Degrees* and *tranſporting Meaſures in this*, *than in other parts of Worſhip and Devotion*.

Theſe things then are neceſſary to a worthy Receiving, and no Good man can complain that they are ſo, ſince they

are equally neceſſary to all acceptable Goodneſs, to all comfortable Hopes, and to every other Ordinance, to all the parts of Worſhip and Religion, and to Gods being pleaſed with us in every thing that is either the *Duty*, or *Priviledge* of a Chriſtian.

And as the *Preſence*, and *Exerciſe* of *theſe* Virtues makes us worthy of the Communion; ſo doth the *abſence* of *them*, but eſpecially of *Repentance* of all our known Sins, (which is the thing, if any, that will be wanting, and which is the cauſe why others are, Impenitence, as we ſaw, being at the bottom of all Unworthineſs) make us *unworthy* and moſt *unwelcome*. If we continue Impenitent in *many*, or in *any one known Sin*, we are indeed unworthy to Communicate; but then withall we are as unworthy to be thought Good men, to go to Heaven, to ſay our Prayers, to make Vows, or to have any Dealings with God in any other Actions of Religion. And the way for any Wiſe man in that Caſe, is not to take up with abſtaining from the Communion, for he ought as much to abſtain from Prayer, and Praiſe, and every other Office of a Chriſtian, God being pleaſed with him in none of them; but forthwith to Repent and Abandon ſuch ill Courſe, that ſo he may be a welcome

come Gueſt, and worthy to partake of them.

And thus having endeavoured to give ſome help to all thoſe who deſire *worthily to Communicate*, by ſhewing *what is the meaning of Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Bleſſed Sacrament*, and *wherein lies the worthineſs of doing it* : I ſhall proceed now in the third Place *to exhort and preſs men on to it*, by ſhewing them *how much it is every good Chriſtians Duty to frequent it*, and *how great the Benefits are that come by it, which ſhould make them ſeek to it of themſelves were it not commanded*, of which in the next Part.

PART II.

CHAP. I.

Of the Duty of Communicating.

The Contents.

To Communicate is a Duty incumbent on us, as appears, 1. *From the obliging import of the Command about it. This Command of Christ shewn, and several Notes added, which greatly recommend and enforce it.* viz. *It is such an Instance, as best shews our peculiar Reverence and Love to him; the whole yoke of* Jewish *Ceremonies is taken away, and only it, and Baptism, two cheap and easie Rites, imposed instead of them; it was his last Command, he gave it the Night before he suffered; in St.* Paul's *Commission to Preach the Gospel,*

it

it was particularly specified; without greatest Danger to our selves it cannot be neglected, as appears from our Saviours words Joh. 6. 53. *which are shewn to speak of it; and from the Danger of Neglecting the* Jewish *Passover, which answered to it.* 2. *From the obliging Nature of those things which are meant by it,* viz. *Because therein we publickly own Christ and his Religion, and solemnly remember him, and confirm the New Covenant with God, and a League of Friendship with our Brethren, and are vouchsafed the highest Honour, and receive Tokens of greatest Love, and enjoyment of present Graces, and pledges of future Glory from him: all which no Good man ought, and no Ingenuous man will Decline, when he is call'd to them. This Duty obliges those only who are of Age for it, and them too only at such times as they have an Opportunity and a fit Occasion offered. An Objection against its being a Duty from* 1 Cor. 11. 25, *answered. The Neglect of it is a great Sin. This God may excuse in those good Souls, who through Ignorance or Error are held back, and because of their over-high Veneration for it think themselves unworthy to come to it, whilst in the honesty of their Hearts they thus mistake it. But he will not excuse it in them when*

they are better inform'd; and much leſs in others, who neglect it becauſe they are careleſs of it, or too Wicked and Impenitent to receive it.

THE worthy receiving of the Sacrament, which I have hitherto Deſcribed, is no *Indifferent thing*, which may either be *done*, or *let alone* according to Diſcretion; but an *indiſpenſable Duty*, wherein God has ſtraitly bound, and which he has peremptorily required of every *grown Chriſtian*.

And this will appear theſe *two* ways.

1*ſt*, From the *Expreſſneſs*, *and Obliging import of the Command about it.*

2ly, From the *Obliging Nature of thoſe things which are meant by it.*

1*ſt*, That every Chriſtian ought to frequent the Holy Sacrament, and come to it when he is call'd and an opportunity is offered, appears from the *expreſſneſs*, *and obliging import of the Command about it.* For our Bleſſed *Lord* has given us his *Command* for it, and that with ſuch *particular Notes* and *Circumſtances*, as ſhews he lays a great weight upon it, which muſt needs oblige all, that have any regard to him, to frequent it.

He has given us, I ſay, *his expreſs Command for it.* For thus St. *Paul* tells us *he*

he injoined, when he ordained this *Feaſt*. *He took Bread*, ſays he, *and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and ſaid, Take, eat, this is my Body which is broken for you; this DO in Remembrance of me.* And *after the ſame manner he took the Cup, ſaying, This Cup is the New Teſtament in my Blood; this DO ye, as often as you Drink it, in remembrance of me.* 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25. And if we had nothing more than this plain Command for it, it were enough to make every man, who would pleaſe God and go to Heaven, to come to it when he is invited. For *then ye are my Friends*, ſays Chriſt, when *ye do whatſoever I Command you.* Joh. 15. 14. And *he that ſhall break the leaſt of my Commandments, and ſhall teach men ſo, ſhall be leaſt in the Kingdom of Heaven: i. e.* he ſhall not enter, or have any ſhare at all there. Mat. 5. 19.

But beſides this *expreſs Command* which he has given for it, we have *other Notes* and *Circumſtances* added, which greatly recommend it, and ſhew that he lays a particular weight upon it. For it is a thing, which is *to be done purely upon his account, and has only our Love of him to enforce it*; ſo that if we have any *Love* and *Reverence for him*, this is the beſt way to ſhew it: *it, and Baptiſm, are the only*

positive Commands he has given us, in exchange for the Numerous, and Expensive Jewish *Ceremonies*; so that in all *Ingenuity* and *Thankfulness* for so great a Benefit we ought to observe it: *it was his Dying and last Command, he gave it the very Night before he Suffered*; *it was thought by him a Command so material, that in St.* Paul's *Commission to Preach the Gospel it was not omitted, but particularly specified*: And lastly, it is a Command which, as the *Scripture* plainly intimates, *without great danger to our selves cannot either be unworthily kept, or neglected.*

1*st*, It is a thing which is *to be done purely upon his account, having no other Reason but his Command to bind and enforce it*; so that if we have any *Love* and *Reverence for him*, this is the *best way* to shew it. As for the Duties of *Humility*, *Temperance*, *Justice*, *Faithfulness*, *Gratitude*, *Charity*, *Peace*, *Prayers to God*, and the like: Though Christ has told us of them, and expressly *injoyn'd them*, as well as *this*; yet is not he alone in that, but they were sufficiently proclaimed before he came, to the *Jews* by *Moses* and the *Prophets*, and to the *Gentile World by Natural Conscience*. In declaring *them*, he had an open way made for him, and the Consciences of all men ready to strike in with him,

him, which, among all good Minds, would much facilitate their Reception. But in *this* Command, he ſtands alone; for *Natural Reaſon* knows nothing of it, nor will the Conſcience of any man, but a *Chriſtian*, oblige him to it: So that here we have no Light but his Word, no Motive but our Obedience to him to perſwade it; and therefore if we do it at all, muſt be purely for his ſake, without any other Inducement.

And this is a ſtrong Bond upon all that *Love their Lord*, and have any *peculiarity of Reſpect for him*, to obſerve it. It is the true Cauſe and Reaſon, indeed, why ſome neglect it, who, becauſe their own Conſcience doth not ſtartle at it, and check them ſo ſeverely for abſenting from this Feaſt, as for Drunkenneſs, Whoredome, Lyes, Cheating, *&c.* which have not only *Chriſts Laws*, but *Natural Reaſon* alſo to exclaim againſt them, go on ſecurely in their contempt of it. And if men have no Love for their Lord, no peculiar Regard for any thing becauſe he has injoyn'd it, or are not duly inform'd of his Command about it, thus it will be. But if any that ſee he has made it their Duty, have any peculiar Love, and Regard to him; they will greedily embrace this as the beſt Opportunity of ſhewing

their

their Affection to his Service, since therein they can be sway'd by nothing else, and most readily Communicate, when he calls them so to do.

2ly, *It and Baptism*, those two *cheap* and *easie* Things, *are the only positive Commands he has laid upon us, when he took off the heavy yoke of the Numerous, Expensive, and Laborious* Jewish *Precepts*; so that out of *Natural Equity*, and to shew our *Thankfulness for such a gainful Exchange*, we ought most readily to observe it.

The *Jews* were loaded with a *Number* of *Troublesome* and *Expensive Rites*, which had no Goodness discernable in themselves, nor any thing, but the Revelation made by *Moses*, to recommend them to their *Consciences*: Such
† Lev. 11. 7. as the † *forbearing Swine*, and *several sorts of Flesh*; the *washing of their Bodies*
* Num. 19. 13. *upon their* * *touching of any Dead Persons*, and upon
† Lev. 15. any † *Corporal Uncleannesses*; the *bringing Offerings* and *Sacrifice of Fed Beasts at return of Thanks*, and for *Propitiation upon any Offences*; and many other cumbersome and costly Rites, which the Apostle calls *the Law of Carnal Commandments*, Heb. 7. 16. and 9. 10, and *weak and beggerly Elements*, Gal. 4. 9, which were

were given them, not becauſe the things deſerv'd it, but only that they might be kept imploy'd, as uſeleſs Exerciſes are to Children to hinder them from more hurtful Work; and ſo were ſuited only to the *Infancy*, and *Non-age of the World*, Gal. 4. 3.

But from all this *Burden of Ceremonies*, *under* which, as St. *Peter* ſays, *they* and *their Fathers groaned* and *were oppreſſed*, Act. 15. 10. by the coming of *Chriſt* we are moſt graciouſly delivered. For *he has aboliſh'd in his Fleſh*, *i. e.* by his Death, wherein he gave his Body for us, *the Law of Commandments contain'd in Ordinances*, Eph. 2. 15. He has *blotted out the hand-writing of Ordinances that was againſt us*, *which was contrary to us*, (hedging in the Church within the *Jews*, and excluding all us *Gentiles*) *and took it out of the way*, *nailing it to his Croſs*, Col. 2. 14. All this Law of *Jewiſh Ceremonies* he has abrogated, and procured us a compleat liberty and exemption from it, injoining us only theſe *two cheap* and *eaſie Rites*, of *Baptiſm* and the *Lords Supper*, inſtead of it. And if any man has but *Common Ingenuity*, and will return *Equitably* for what is done, and much more if he has any *grateful Reſentments* for ſo valuable an Exemption, he muſt needs ſubmit with all Thankful-

neſs

neſs to this gainful Exchange and Impoſition, and run to it with as much forwardneſs, as any man would to pay *Twelve pence* in full Diſcharge of *twenty pound*.

3*ly*, It was his *Dying and laſt Command*, *he gave it the very Night before he ſuffered*. *The ſame night*, ſays St. *Paul*, *in which he was betray'd*, *he took Bread*, *and ſaid*, *Take*, *eat*, *this do in remembrance of me*. 1 Cor. 11. 23, 24. And this, had it come only in the Nature of a *Requeſt*, and not with the *Authority of a Command*, muſt needs have made it of greateſt Power with us. For it is great *Inhumanity*, and ſhews an *hard Heart*, to deny the *laſt Suit* of a *Dying* Perſon, though he were a *Stranger* to us; and *baſe Ingratitude*, and a *Falſification of all Friendſhip* to throw back the *laſt Requeſt of a Dying Friend*, eſpecially if he is *before hand* with us, and has done much more than his Requeſt comes to for our ſakes; and the *greateſt aggravation of all Diſobedience* to ſlight the *Laſt Will* and *Words* of our *Fathers*, or *Maſters*, or others that have Right over us, and Power to Command us. And therefore ſince our *Bleſſed Lord*, who came upon Earth for no other end but to do us Service, yea even to lay down his Life for our ſakes, after all the Pains and Coſt

Cost he has been at for us, left this as his *last Will*, and both *intreated* and *injoyn'd* at parting, that we should eat and drink in Remembrance of him; if we have *any shame* we *cannot*, and if we *profess any Duty* we *dare not*, and if we have *any Love for him* we *will not* neglect it, but come to it out of mindfulness of our *gone Friend* and *Departed Lord*, as oft as we shall have opportunity so to do.

4*ly*, It was thought by Christ a Command so *material*, that *when St.* Paul *received his Commission to Preach the Gospel, it was by name inserted, and particularly specified*; and this *special Designation* of it shews that he was more than *ordinarily* concerned for it. *I have received of the Lord*, says he, or by his Revelation, when I was call'd by him, *that which I also delivered unto you*, as from him, namely, *that the same night he was betrayed, he took Bread, and said, Take, eat, this is my Body which is broken for you, this do in remembrance of me*, 1 Cor. 11. 23, 24.

5*ly*, It is a *Command*, which, as the *Scripture* plainly intimates, *without great danger to our selves cannot either be unworthily kept, or neglected.*

Without very *great* and *apparent danger to our selves*, we cannot *come Unworthily to the Sacrament. For he that eats and drinks*

drinks unworthily, says St. *Paul*, *eats and drinks Damnation to himself*, 1 Cor. 11.29.

And *without a like danger we cannot neglect, or keep back from it. Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man*, says our Saviour, *and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you.* Joh. 6. 53. This the *Ancient Church*, as is well known, understood generally of *eating his Flesh in the Holy Sacrament*; which is the great Reason they give for that Practice so common among them, namely, why *Infants are to be Communicated.* And of this there is great cause to understand it. For 'tis hard to think of any thing, that can support such *full Expressions, as eating of his Body*, and *drinking of his Blood*; besides *eating Bread*, and *drinking Wine in the Sacrament*, which he calls *his Body* and *his Blood* when he institutes it. *Mat.* 26. 26, 27, 28. And besides, in this very place he directs us to his *Body Crucified*, and *given for the Life of the World*; to shew the Eating relates to it as *so represented*, which is no where done but in the *Eucharist. I am the living Bread*, says he, which *whoso eats shall live for ever: and the Bread which I will give*, *i.e.* to be eaten, *is* my Body Crucified, which under that Notion is represented only in the Sacrament, or *my Flesh which I will give for the Life of the World.* And

except

except ye thus *eat the Fleſh, and drink the Blood of the Son of Man, ye have no Life in you*, Joh. 6. 51, 52, 53.

This Diſcourſe, indeed, of *eating his Fleſh in the Sacrament*, was before the Sacrament it ſelf was *inſtituted*. But ſo was his Diſcourſe of *Baptiſm* to *Nicodemus*, before *Baptiſm* was appointed for the *ſtanding Rite*, whereby all Mankind ſhould be *Chriſtned*, Joh. 3. 5. And ſo was his Diſcourſe to the People, of *the Death he ſhould dye*, by being *lifted up*, before he was *Crucified*, Joh. 12. 32, 33. And ſo was his Diſcourſe of *raiſing up the Temple of his Body after it ſhould be deſtroyed*, before he *was raiſed from the dead*, Joh. 2. 19. 21. And ſo in *this very place* was his Diſcourſe of *giving his Fleſh for the Life of the World*, which they underſtood not before he *ſuffered*, more than they did this *Sacramental eating* of it before the *Sacrament* was *appointed*, Joh. 6. 51. Our Saviour ſpake ſeveral things by *Anticipation* in *ſundry* places, as, from this *laſt* inſtance, 'tis plain he did in *this*, which though his Hearers did not at that time fully underſtand, yet they would afterwards: ſo that when other Reaſons evince him to have ſpoke in this place of the Sacramental eating of his Body and Blood; the Sacrament's not being yet inſtituted,

ſtituted, is no good Proof or Argument againſt it.

Thus is this neceſſity of *eating his Fleſh, and drinking his Blood*, as ever we would *hope for Eternal Life by it*, ſpoke of the *Lords Supper*, wherein we Feaſt upon it. And that it ſhould be ſo, has no wonder in it: For it is no more than is expreſly ſpoke of *Baptiſm*, which is but of *equal Rank with it*, both being *alike Duties*, and *equally required*. For of that 'tis ſaid, *He that Believes, and is Baptized, ſhall be ſaved*, Marc. 16. 16. And *except a man be born again of Water, and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*, Joh. 3. 5.

But beſides this Proof of the *danger of neglecting the Sacrament*, becauſe our Lord tells us *we have no Life in us without it*; it may alſo appear from the *danger of neglecting the* Jewiſh *Paſſover*, which *anſwer'd to it*, and was the ſame to *them*, as this Feaſt is to *us*, wherein

† 1 Cor. 5. 7. † *Chriſt our Paſſover is Sacrificed for us.*

And as for the danger of neglecting that, it was great indeed, no leſs than of being *cut off from Iſrael*, which was the puniſhment God had threatned to it. *Whoſoever*, in the Feaſt of the Paſſover, *eats leaven'd Bread, from the Firſt day to the Seventh day, that Soul ſhall be cut off from* Iſrael, Exod. 12. 15. Thus

Thus neceſſary is it for all men, who would pleaſe God, to frequent this Ordinance, and to come to the Holy Sacrament when they are call'd to it. They have *Chriſts expreſs Command for it*, who, by injoyning it, *has required Obedience in ſuch an inſtance, as beſt ſhews their particular Reverence and Love to him*; and to ingage them the more to it, has *freed them from all the load of* Jewiſh *Ceremonies, and impoſed no heavier burden, than it and Baptiſm inſtead of them*; and to make it have the more effect, has *left it among the laſt words, which he ſpake to them*; and to ſhew it was a matter of no ſmall moment, would have it *expreſly ſpecified in St.* Paul's *Commiſſion*; and tells them, That *unleſs they come therein to eat his Fleſh, and drink his Blood, they have no Life in them*; and *will puniſh the neglect, or abuſe of it, as he did of the* Jewiſh *Paſſover which anſwer'd to it, with Exciſion*: All which ſhew the *Greatneſs of the Duty*, and how much it is every mans Concern, who would hope to have the *Favour of God*, or *go to Heaven*.

And as this appears from the *obliging Import*, and *Expreſſneſs of the Command about it*; ſo doth it,

2*ly*, From the *obliging Nature of thoſe things which are meant by it*. For therein

in we *publickly own Chriſt* and *his Religion*, and *ſolemnly remember him*, and *confirm the New Covenant with Almighty God*, and a *League of Friendſhip with our Brethren*, and are *vouchſafed the higheſt Honour*, and *receive Tokens of the greateſt Love*, and *injoyment of preſent Graces*, and *Pledges of future Glories from him*: all which no *Ingenuous man will*, and no *Good man ought* to refuſe, when he is call'd to them.

1*ſt*, In the *Sacrament*, I ſay, we *publickly own Chriſt*, *and profeſs his Religion*. This was always underſtood to be the meaning of *Feaſts on Sacrifices*, both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*; they that would eat of the Sacrifice offer'd to any *God* or *Idol*, were looked on to have *Fellowſhip* and *Communion with him*, and thereby to *own their joyning in that Worſhip and Service, which was paid to him*. Thus St. *Paul* tells us it was among the *Jews*, for *they that ate of their Sacrifices were partakers of their Altars*. And thus he tells us it was among the *Gentiles*, and that they who Feaſted in the *Idol-Temples* on the *Sacrifices made to Devils*, did thereby declare their Communion with them, and had *Fellowſhip with Devils*. And the ſame is true of the Feaſt of the *Lords Supper*, which upon this account, he makes parallel to, and compares with them. In

Iſrael

Israel after the Flesh, says he, *they who eat of the Sacrifice* are sharers in the Worship, or *Partakers of the Altar*. And in the things which *the Gentiles Sacrifice to Devils*, *they* who Feast on the Sacrifices, *have Fellowship with Devils*. And therefore you that Feast with the Lord at his Table, and thereby have Fellowship with him; must not mix Light and Darkness, Christ and *Belial* together, and by Feasting with Devils at theirs, have Fellowship with them too. *You cannot drink the Cup of the Lord, and the Cup of Devils; you cannot be partakers of the Lords Table, and the Table of Devils*; since that were to unite the most opposite Interests, by holding Fellowship, and professing your selves to be the Servants of Christ, and of the Devil also, 1 *Cor.* 10. 16,18,20,21. Our joyning in the Holy Communion, is our avow'd owning of Faith in our Crucified Lord, and of our adherence to him. By eating at his Table of *broken Bread*, and *Wine poured out*, which are the Representation of his *Death*; we *tell it out to all the World* that we are the *Servants of that Lord*, and *Worshippers of that Jesus*, who gave himself to be *Crucified* and *to Dye* for us. *As often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup*, saith St. *Paul*, *ye do shew forth the Lords Death till he come*. Ye

shew

† Καταγγέλλετε. *ſhew forth his Death, i. e.* ye † tell it abroad, and profeſs to all the World, that he dyed for you, and is Lord over you, and that you own him ſo to be, 1 *Cor.* 11. 26.

Thus is our eating Bread, and drinking Wine at the Lords Table, an open profeſſion of his Religion, and a Token whereby we give out to all the World whoſee what we do, that we belong to him. It is a moſt ſolemn ſign of our Relation to Chriſt, and a publick Badge of our being Chriſtians. And this ſure no man will decline when there is a fit occaſion, who is not aſhamed of his Lord, nor Repents of his Profeſſion: But if he is really a Follower of Chriſt, and would be thought one; he will let all the World know it by joyning in this Feaſt, which is the moſt Solemn Badge, and Authentick Mark, which Chriſt has appointed of it.

2*ly*, In coming to the Holy Sacrament, according to our Lords appointment, we *ſolemnly remember him*, and *think of the Relation wherein we ſtand*, and of *the benefits which we have received from him. Do this*, ſays he, *in remembrance of me.* 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25.

And when he is call'd to remember his moſt precious Saviour, who has both lived

lived and dyed to make God his Friend, and to do him Service; there is no man ſure, that has any thing of *Shame*, or *Ingenuity* left in him, who will ſhew backwardneſs, and begin to make excuſes. For has not he done enough for us, to deſerve to be thought of? Do not all the inexpreſſible Favours he has gain'd, and all the exquiſite Pains he underwent for our ſakes, moſt juſtly challenge to be held in remembrance? He left *unutterable Glories*, and ſubmitted to *all ſorts of Earthly Calamities*, and took *unwearied Pains*, and ſhewed *Invincible Patience*, and laid down at laſt his *own Life* to ſave our Souls: and muſt all this be forgotten now 'tis done, and quite buried in ſilence? What man of any *Ingenuity*, that has been happy in ſuch a *Friend*, can be averſe to remember him? What man, that has been bleſſed in ſuch a *Saviour*, can ever decline the Thoughts of him? Unleſs we will ſhew our ſelves *groſsly ſtupid*, or *intolerably proud*, and *both* ways *Monſters of Ingratitude*; we muſt needs be ready to Celebrate the memory of ſuch a Perſon, when we are called to do that Honour to him: and none that would be thought a *man*, much more a *Chriſtian*, muſt ever refuſe to remember his Saviour Chriſt, and give him Thanks, when in the

the Sacrament he is call'd to it in Christ's own Name, and by his ſpecial invitation.

3*ly*, In eating Bread and drinking Wine at the Sacrament, we *confirm the New Covenant with Almighty God.* In this Feaſt, as has been ſhewn, we aſſure him that we will *Repent of every ſin*, as ever we hope that he will *forgive* us; and will *endeavour with* his Grace after *every Virtue*, as ever we expect that he ſhould *aſſiſt* us; and *obey every one of his Commandments*, as ever we look that he ſhould Crown us with *Eternal Happineſs*; and *believe* that, for *Chriſts ſake*, we ſhall have this *Pardon*, *Grace*, and *Eternal Life upon theſe Terms*, and *not otherwiſe*: for all theſe Duties we give him our Word and Promiſe; and, on that Condition, for all theſe Bleſſings he gives us his Seal and Aſſurance back again.

And what man is there, who pretends to the Name of a *Chriſtian*, who will refuſe to do this when he has an Authentick Summons, nay, even a Friendly Invitation? will he not *Repent*, that he may be *forgiven*? nor *endeavour* after ſuch Graces as he wants, that *Gods Spirit* may *help* him to them? nor *obey* all his Saviours Laws, that he may be *happy in Heaven*? nor *believe*, that Chriſt has purchaſed theſe Benefits for us at Gods hands, upon theſe Terms;

Terms; but that without performing them we ſhall never have them? If he will not do all this, why doth he make any pretence to Religion? If he is unreſolv'd, and ſuſpends about any of theſe Particulars, why doth he profeſs himſelf a *Chriſtian?* For theſe things are the very ſubſtance of *Chriſtianity*, and the Life and Soul of all *Religion*. No man can belong to Chriſt without them, and when he was *Baptized* and came to him, he ſolemnly undertook and ingaged for them. And therefore if any man will refuſe to make God his engagement of this *Faith*, *Repentance*, and *Obedience*, when he is call'd to *Promiſe* and *Profeſs* them; he revolts from his *Baptiſmal Vow*, and, if he perſiſts in that mind, may as well renounce his Profeſſion, and turn his back on the whole Chriſtian Religion.

4*ly*, In eating Bread and drinking Wine at the Lords Supper, we *confirm a League of Love and Friendſhip with all our Brethren*, this being one end, as I have ſhewn, of this meeting, to *profeſs our ſelves in perfect Peace and Charity with all men.*

And who now, that owns himſelf a *Chriſtian*, can ſeek ſhifts, and ſhun this when God calls him? when his Saviour, that dyed to make God Friends with him,

asks him to be Friends with all the World; can he refuse him? When he invites him to be at Peace with all his Members, and to embrace them all as Brethren; can he fly from him? If he shun this, he may as well shun every thing else, and quit all claim to his Religion. For *by this*, says our Saviour, *shall all men know that you are my Disciples, if ye have Love one to another.* Joh. 13. 35. And *unless ye forgive men their Trespasses*, says he again, *neither will your heavenly Father forgive you* yours. Mat. 6. 15. And *he that says he Loves God, and* yet *hates his Brother*, saith St. *John, is a Lyar.* 1 Joh. 4. 20. And *if it be possible*, saith St. Paul, *and as much as in you lies, live peaceably with all men.* Rom. 12. 18. *Love*, and *Peace*, and *mutual Friendship* and *Beneficence*, are the great Duties which Christs Law prescribes, and which all his Followers must be forward at all times to make profession of. And therefore if any man turns away from declaring them, when God calls him to them; he turns his back of the most Signal Duty of his Religion, and will not come to that, whereby, above all things else, he should declare himself a Christian.

5*ly*, In Feasting with God at the Holy Sacrament, we are *vouchsafed the high est*

higheſt Honour, and *receive Tokens of higheſt Love*, and *injoyment of preſent Graces*, and *Pledges of future Glory from him*; and theſe no man ought to refuſe, when he is call'd to them.

He *vouchſafes us the greateſt Honour*. For he calls us to his *own Table*, and tells us he is moſt glad to ſee us there, and that the oftner we come, the welcomer ſhall we be to his Supper; he invites us as his *own Gueſts*, and thereby ſeeks our *Company* and *Acquaintance*, and treats us as his *Friends* and *Confidents*; which Honour is ſo high, that greater cannot be ſhewed us.

He *gives us the ſureſt Tokens of higheſt Love*. For he calls us to Feaſt upon the *Body* and *Blood of his own Son*, *i. e.* upon thoſe Bleſſings which the breaking of his Body and ſhedding of his Blood procured for men; and ſhews us plainly that he is ſtill of the ſame mind, and is glad that for our ſakes he parted with him. For his inviting us to eat the Body, and drink the Blood of Chriſt in this Holy Supper, imports as much as if he ſhould ſay to us. *Lo! here my dear and only Son, whom I gave to ſhed his own hearts Blood a Ranſome for your Souls. When I did it, your ſins were moſt provoking, and render'd you utterly undeſerving of it; and ſince you*

have received it, you have not been affected as you ought, but have shewed your selves most unthankful for it: but yet all this doth not make me Repent of what I have done, or grudge you the Benefit of him. I am come here freely to present you with him, and invite you, and exhort you, nay, intreat you to accept him. Eat his Body, and drink his Blood, i. e. those Benefits and that Expiation which was purchased by it; *I freely give them without grudging, nay, I shall take it extreamly ill if you refuse them. For I would by all means have you receive the advantage of him. I gave him once for you, and now again I give him to you; I am still of the same mind, to part with my own dear Son for your sakes, and to bestow him on you. I have nothing better wherewith to present you, but with him in this Holy Feast I do; and what higher Tokens can I give of the unbounded Love I bear you?*

He *gives us present injoyment of many invaluable Graces.* For the Lords Supper is a Treasury of Blessings, conveying to all those, who worthily partake of it, the *Pardon of their Sins*, and *Spiritual Assistances*, and *Heavenly Improvements*, and *growth in all Virtues*, and *strength against all Temptations*, as I shall shew under the *next* Head.

And *lastly*, He *gives us the surest Pledges of future Glory*. For when he offers us his

his *own Son*, we may be ſure he will not ſtick at any thing elſe, ſince he has nothing that is in any comparable Degree ſo precious and dear to him, as he is. This Gift is a *Faithful Earneſt*, and *certain Pledge* of every thing elſe which he can give us. For *he that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; how ſhall he not with him freely give us all things?* ſays St. *Paul*, *Rom.* 8. 32.

Thus in the *Bleſſed Sacrament*, are we *vouchſafed the greateſt Honour*, and *receive Tokens of higheſt Love*, and *injoyment of preſent Graces*, and *Pledges of future Glories from Almighty God.*

And what man now will refuſe all theſe, when he is invited to them? Who can turn his back upon that Ordinance, wherein God calls him, that he may give Honour to him, and ſhew by the higheſt Tokens how he Loves him, and confer upon him preſent Graces, and give him Pledges of future Glories, and aſſure him what Regard he has of him, and how happy he intends to make him? *Common Ingenuity*, and *Good manners*, nay, every mans own *private Intereſt* and *Self-advantage* oblige him moſt readily to embrace, and not to *ſleight*, or ſo much as *ſlowly to accept* of ſuch offers. So that if any Perſon really believes, that all this Honour is

ſhewn, this Love expreſſed, theſe Graces given, or theſe Glories aſſured to him in the Communion: he muſt needs think himſelf highly obliged to come to it, and never caſt about to ſeek ſhifts, and make excuſes, or expreſs a backward and unwilling mind, when he has an Invitation and an Opportunity ſo to do.

And thus we ſee, that not only our *Lords expreſs Command for it*, but alſo the *obliging Nature of thoſe things which are meant by*, and of *thoſe employments which are imply'd in* it, are a *ſtrong* and an *indiſpenſable Obligation* on all *grown Chriſtians*, who are capable of it, *to frequent the Holy Sacrament*. For therein they are call'd by their Saviour Chriſt, *publickly to profeſs his Religion*, and *their Communion with him*, and *thankfully to remember him*, and to *confirm the New Covenant with God*, and a *League of Love and Friendſhip with their Brethren*, and to *receive Vouchſafements of higheſt Honour*, and *Tokens of greateſt Love*, and *injoyment of preſent Graces*, and *Pledges of future Glories from him*: all which are things that no Chriſtian man ought to ſtick at, or decline, but with all forwardneſs to cloſe with, as often as he has an Opportunity, and fit occaſion for them.

And thus it appears now much all the

Diſciples

Diſciples of Chriſt, who are *grown up* to it, and *underſtand* it (for no Duty obliges an *incapable* Subject) are bound to frequent this holy Sacrament. It is their Duty to *come to the Communion*, as it is to *come to Church*, to be *Chaſt*, *Sober*, *Humble*, *Juſt*, or to perform *any other Precept* of their *Religion*. For they have their *Saviour Chriſts expreſs Command for it*, who by injoining it, has *required Obedience in ſuch an Inſtance, as beſt ſhews their peculiar Reverence and Love to him*; and to ingage them the more to it, has *freed them from all the load of* Jewiſh *Ceremonies, and impoſed no heavier burden, than it and Baptiſm inſtead of them*; and to make it take the more effect, *left it among the laſt words which he ſpake to them*; and to ſhew it was a mattter of no ſmall moment, would have it *expreſly ſpecified in St.* Paul's *Commiſſion*; and tells them, That *unleſs they come therein to eat his Fleſh and drink his Blood, they have no Life in them*; and *will puniſh the neglect, or abuſe of it, as he did the neglect of the* Jewiſh *Paſſover, which anſwer'd to it, with Exciſion*. And the *Nature of thoſe things which are meant by it*, and of thoſe *Employments which are to be exerciſed at it*, moſt *ſtraightly oblige* them to it. For therein they ſhew they have *Fellowſhip with Chriſt*, and *appertain to his Re-*

ligion, and *thankfully remember him*, and *Seal the New Covenant with God*, and a *League of Love* and *Friendſhip with their Brethren*, and are *vouchſafed the higheſt Honour*, and *receive Tokens of the greateſt Love*, and *injoyment of preſent Graces*, and *Pledges of future Glories from him*: which are things that every *Ingenuous* man *will*, and every *Good* man *ought* to do, and no man, when he is call'd to it, can honeſtly decline, that profeſſes himſelf a Chriſtian.

Thus is it a *neceſſary Duty* in every man to *come* to the *Sacrament*, as it is to *come* to *Church*, or to other *parts of Worſhip*: And *when once we are of Age for it*, and *have a fit opportunity and occaſion offer'd*; we are in ſtrict Duty ingaged, and by a bond of many Cords, as we have ſeen, obliged ſo to do.

1*ſt*, I ſay we are *bound to it*, *when once we are of Age for it*. The Duty of this *Holy Sacrament* lies in ſuch things, as ſuppoſe a competent Underſtanding, and due Knowledge of Religion in thoſe who muſt diſcharge them. For therein we are to *remember Chriſt*, both what Commands he has left with us, and what he has done and ſuffered for us; and this we cannot do, till *firſt we have learnt* them. We muſt *ingage to be at Peace*, to *do Juſtice*,

ſtice, and *ſhew kindneſs to all our Brethren*; and this ſuppoſes that we know *firſt* what *Offices of Love*, and *Acts of Juſtice are due* to them. We muſt *conſent to the Terms of the New Covenant*, and this implies that *firſt* we ſhould *underſtand* them. In *Baptiſm*, indeed, we enter'd into it before we had any knowledge of it; but that was becauſe God, (who deals with us after the moſt favourable manner of Men, who allow grown Perſons to bear the Parts, and federally to undertake for Infants, in things conducing to their Advantage,) admitted our *Sponſors*, that knew it very well, to ſtand as our *Repreſentatives*, and in way of *Proxies* to Covenant and undertake for us. But the Sacrament of the *Lords Supper* is to be our *own Act*, and an expreſs aſſenting in our own Perſons to what they undertook; and this cannot be done till we are come to years, and are able of our ſelves to judge of it.

Till we are grown up then to the Age of Competent knowledge in Spiritual Affairs, we are not *capable* of diſcharging aright the Duty of this Sacrament. And till we are ſo we are not obliged to it, ſince no Duty obliges an *incapable* Subject. For 'tis in *this* Duty, as 'tis in that of *making Peace*, or *giving good Advice*, or any others; they bind us not till we

are grown up to them, and are come to know rightly how to discharge them. For in all these Cases, God exacts an account only of those *Talents* which he has entrusted with us, as we are told in the *Parable* of the men who had *received the Talents*, Mat. 25. and his Rule of proceeding is this, *unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more*, Luc. 12. 48.

2*ly*, When we are of *Age* for it, we are bound to it only *when we have an opportunity, and a fit occasion is offered.* It is in the *Communion at the Sacrament*, as it is in *our Communion in Prayers*, and *other parts of Worship*; we are *bound to join in them when they can be had, and we are not lawfully hindered and diverted from it.* But if either there is *no place* for them, or we are *justly hindered* from attending on them; we have no obliging opportunity for that time, but may without sin omit them. And thus it is when we are hindred by some *call of Providence*, when at that time we are call'd away to do some necessary Duty of *Justice*, or *Charity*, in another place. Or when we are detained at home by some *Disease*, or *bodily Indisposition*, under which it is not safe to go abroad, or venture out beyond our own Chambers; in

in which caſe God, who prefers *Mercy before Sacrifice*, when they thwart and interfere, *i. e. Eſſential Duties* before *poſitive Precepts*, will excuſe us. Or, laſtly, when *our minds are diſturbed* by *great Grief*, that cannot preſently be caſt off, or by *ſudden Anger* or *Diſcontent* occaſioned hard before, (which though ordinarily it be our own Fault, may yet ſometimes be innocent;) at which time, ſince their Diſcompoſure unfits them for ſo Divine a Service, they may omit it as being indiſpoſed for it. This St. *Peter* intimates of *Prayers*, (and the Reaſon is the ſame of *this Ordinance*) when he exhorts the *Husband*, by a *diſcreet compliance*, and *patient bearing of his Wives Infirmities*, to prevent all *Peeviſhneſs* and *Domeſtick quarrels*, that ſo they may have no need to *omit* or *put by* their *Devotions*; which, it ſeems, they would, if their minds were acted at that time by ſuch undue Tempers. *Ye Husbands*, ſays he, *dwell with your Wives according to Knowledge*; *giving Honour to the Wives*, or treating them with Lenity and Care, as men do brittle Ware, becauſe they are *the Weaker Veſſels*, *that your Prayers be not hindered* by thoſe Heats and Animoſities, which very likely might ariſe otherwiſe, 1 *Pet.* 3. 7.

† Παρακαλέσας Παυσόφιον τὸν Πισσίδης παραχωρεῖν τὰ δῶρα· αὐτὸς συνεξηλθεν τοῖς λοιποῖς ἐπισκόποις. Παρητεῖτο γὰρ ἐπιδόλως διεστάναι. Palladius Dialog de vit. Chryſoſt. p. 128.

3. 7. And this was once the caſe of St. † *Chryſoſtom*, who, at the time of Adminiſtring the Sacrament, being accidentally much diſcompoſed in mind, by an unſeaſonable demand of Juſtice made by *Euſebius* againſt *Antonine* in the *Synod* then Aſſembled, went out, and deſired one of the *Biſhops* then preſent to Officiate, declining the Communion at that Inſtant, becauſe he had *ſome Trouble upon his Spirit.*

If then we either are *not come to years to underſtand it*, or have *no obliging opportunity for it*, or *ſome juſt hindrance that would excuſe it*; this Duty of the Sacrament may *lawfully be omitted.* It is like in *it*, as it is in our *joyning in Prayers*, or *going to Church*; it admits of the *ſame Excuſes*, and obliges in the *ſame Caſes.* But where theſe rare Contingencies happen not, to exempt from it; it is a ſtrict Duty that is bound upon us, as we have ſeen, by a Bond of many Cords, and a peremptory Commandment. So that when we have an opportunity for it, and no juſt hindrance to put us by it, to Communicate is a ſtrict Precept, and in all Duty we are obliged ſo to do.

But

But againſt this expreſneſs of the Command, and ſtrictneſs of the Duty to Communicate; ſome perhaps may urge the words of St. *Paul*, 1 Cor. 11. *Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me*, v. 25. which words, *as often*, ſeem to limit the precept only to the *Remembrance of Chriſt when we do Communicate*, and to intimate, as if we had no Command to *do this*, and ſo with out ſin might omit it when we pleaſe, but only to *remember him when we do.*

Now in *Anſwer* to this, I obſerve,

1*ſt*, Theſe words, if we had no other proof of it, *would not of themſelves prove it a Command*, and *ſtrict Duty to Communicate.* But,

2*ly*, *Neither do they infer the Contrary, and prove againſt it.*

3*ly*, *There are other Places enow, which ſufficiently evince it.*

1*ſt*, I ſay, theſe words, *Do this, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me*, if we had no other proof for it, *would not amount to an obliging Command, and prove it a ſtrict Duty to Communicate.* For that which is plainly and indiſputably expreſſed in them, is not that we *ſhould Communicate*, but that we *ſhould Remember Chriſt when we do it*, and they might have their full Senſe, if nothing more than this were intended. But

But as of themſelves they do not amount to ſuch a Precept; ſo,

2ly, *Neither do they infer the contrary, and prove againſt it.* All that which they expreſs, is only that we muſt remember Chriſt when we do Communicate; and this is done whether Communicating it ſelf be a Duty, or whether it be not; and ſuiting thus equally with any ſide, as it doth not prove it a Duty to receive the Sacrament, ſo neither doth it prove there is no Duty in it. And of this we have ſtill a further Argument, becauſe if theſe words, *as often*, &c. infer there is no Duty to Communicate, the ſame may be infer'd of Prayer, ſince in *another Place* they are ſpoke of it, as *here* they are of the Sacrament. *When*, *i. e.* as often as *ye Pray*, ſays our Saviour, *ſay*, *Our Father which art in Heaven*, &c. *Luc.* 11.2. So that if they prove we are *not bound to Communicate*, but only to *remember Chriſt when we do it*; they will prove we are *not bound to pray*, but only *when we pray* directed to uſe *this Form* in Prayer too.

Thus are theſe words, *Do this*, *as often as ye drink it*, &c. neither an Argument that to Communicate is a Duty, nor an Argument againſt it. They are indifferent, and equally incline both ways; ſo that when *that* is the *Queſtion*, of themſelves

ſelves they are no proof on any ſide, but other things muſt decide it.

And then,

3*ly*, Although *this* place do not prove it an expreſs Duty to Communicate, yet there are *other places enow that do ſufficiently evince it.* For in *this* very *Chapter*, the words of our Lord at the *eating of the Bread* are abſolute, and imply an *expreſs Command* for *it*: *Do this*, ſays he, *i. e.* Take and eat Bread as now ye do, *in remembrance of me*; where not only the remembrance is injoined, but alſo this particular way of doing it, *viz.* by eating Bread, wherein he is to be remembred, 1 *Cor.* 11. 24. And ſo 'tis alſo in St. † *Luke*, where the Words are *Peremptory* for the *Apoſtles adminiſtring*, and ſo anſwerably for the *Peoples receiving* it, without any intimation of the *eating it ſelf* being *indifferent* and *uncommanded*; which that *Evangeliſt* would not ſo unwarily have expreſſed, if Chriſt had ſo intended it. And our *Lord* ſhew'd us, not only that he has commanded this Sacramental eating, but that he has commanded it as a *neceſſary* thing, when he tells his Hearers, that *except they thus eat the Fleſh, and drink the Blood of the Son of Man, they have no Life in them*, Joh. 6. 53. And this neceſſity of it

† Luc. 22. 19.

it is further manifeſted, from the *neceſſity of the Paſſover* among the *Jews*, which anſwered to it; for at every Return of it, they were to be *cut off from Iſrael* whoſoever preſumed to omit it. *Exod.* 12. 15. And if there were no expreſs Command for it, yet are the *things* we are call'd to in it all of that *obliging Nature*, and ſuch *neceſſary Duties*, that without Sin they cannot be declined. By all which, as we have ſeen, this Sacramental eating and drinking is evidently proved to be a *plain Duty*, and under a *peremptory Commandment*.

When therefore in this place the *Apoſtle* ſays of our drinking of the Cup, *Do this, as often as ye drink it*, he doth not intimate that we may do it as ſeldome as we pleaſe, or as if it were under no Law, or expreſs Precept. He uſes the words, *as often*, not becauſe 'tis an *Arbitrary Act* and there is no Duty in it; but becauſe, though it be a Duty, we have not *always opportunity for it*, and ſo cannot *always* be performing it. For, as has been ſhewn, there is a Command to Communicate, and that, as all other *Affirmative Laws*, binds us to it at all times when a *fit occaſion* is offer'd. When we eat and drink in the Sacrament, we muſt remember Chriſt; and when we have an opportunity to eat and drink

drink in it, we are obliged to it; as the *Jews*, we ſaw, were to the *Paſſover* which anſwered to it, who were to be cut off from *Iſrael*, when at any time they omitted it: So that to Communicate is no *Arbitrary* Act, but an *indiſpenſable Duty*, and peremptory Command ſtill.

And ſince it is thus neceſſary a Duty in every *grown Chriſtian* to *come* to the Holy Sacrament; it muſt needs be a *great* and *dangerous Sin* in any of us, when we *neglect* and *abſtain* from it. We muſt not think it an *indifferent* thing, but make *Conſcience* of *keeping off from the Holy Communion*, as we do of *keeping off from Prayers*, of *Swearing*, *doing Wrong*, being *Proud*, *Incontinent*, or *Drunken*. For *it* is expreſly and ſtraitly forbidden by God, as well as *they*, and we incur his Anger, and, till we repent and do ſo no more, cannot regain his Favour, when we are guilty of any of them.

A neglect of the Lords Table therefore is a *Sin*, which, although *God may excuſe* in thoſe good Souls, who, *becauſe of their over-high Veneration for it*, and *Fear of their own Unworthineſs to partake in it*, in the *honeſty of their Hearts* think they ought not to come to it: Yet will he *not excuſe in them when they are better inform'd*; and *much leſs in others who neglect it*, *becauſe*

cause they are careless of it, or *too Wicked and Impenitent to receive it.*

He may excuse it, I say, *in those Good Souls, who in the honesty of their Hearts, through Ignorance* or *Error*, *were held back*, and *because of their over-high Veneration for it, and fear of their Unworthiness to partake in it, thought they ought not to come to it.* An *innocent Ignorance*, or *mistake of an honest mind*, may plead our excuse before God In this, as well as in *other* Duties. For in all of them, *Christ* has *such a Sense of our Infirmities*, as that *he can have Compassion on the Ignorant, and those* that err, or *are out of the way*, Heb. 5. 2. So that if after an upright indeavour to be rightly inform'd in it, some Good Minds shall happen to mistake, their Error will not be imputed. It may be through the *loose Discourses of some*, or the *general Practice* of the World, who, by being so seldom at it, seem to set lightly by it; they think themselves *not obliged* to it. Or again, through the *extream Rigidness* of the Discourses of *others*, who require such extraordinary things to it as very few have attain'd, they think themselves always *unworthy* and *unprepared* for it, and that they should sin, and eat their *own Damnation* in it. But if they fall into these mistakes about it which make them abstain from

from it, after an honeſt indeavour to be rightly inform'd about it; their Ignorance may plead their Excuſe, and make their Neglect to be connived at. God will not account it to them as a ſin, becauſe they knew it not, but were miſtaken. For in this, as well as in all other Caſes, *to him that knows to do Good, and doth it not, to him 'tis Sin*, Jam. 4. 17.

But though God may bear with this *neglect of the Sacrament* in *Good men*, whilſt they are thus *innocently miſled*: Yet *will he not excuſe it in them when they are better inform'd*; and much leſs in *others, who neglect it becauſe they are careleſs of it*, or *too Impenitent to receive it.*

He will not excuſe it even in them when they are better informed. Their only plea for their not doing of this Duty, is, that after the beſt ſearch they could make, they did not know they were bound to it, or that with ſafety they could perform it: and when once their Underſtanding is inlightned, this plea is removed, ſo that afterwards they can find no relief at all from it. They abſtain then, when they know, if they are truly Penitent, they *might*, and *ought* to come; and that abſtinence is *wilful*, and, unleſs they repent of it and amend it, will end in their Condemnation. For *to him that knoweth*

to

to do Good, and doth it not, to him 'tis Sin, Jam. 5. 17.

And much leſs *will he excuſe it in others, who are careleſs of it*, and *too Impenitent to receive it*. If they are hindred from the Lords Table out of *Slothfulneſs*, or are unworthy of it by Reaſon of their *Impenitence*; thoſe are not their *Excuſe*, but their own *Damning Fault*, and they muſt expect to bear the puniſhment of it. To tell God I did not come to the Sacrament becauſe I would not Repent, is to tell him I would not come and promiſe to be Good, becauſe I was reſolved to continue Wicked: and that is a very odd way of excuſing it. *Impenitence* is no excuſe, but a moſt damning Sin; and therefore if we have no other cauſe to give why we did not come, we muſt needs be liable to Condemnation.

If any of you therefore who ſhall peruſe *this Treatiſe*, have refuſed Gods invitation formerly, and have kept back from this Feaſt: by what I have here ſaid you may ſee your Fault, and how nearly you are concerned, as you tender your *dear Saviours Honour*, or the *ſafety of your own moſt precious Souls*, to amend it. You have offended God in *not coming to the Communion*, as you would offend him in *not coming to Church*, in *not ſaying your Prayers*, in

in *not giving Thanks for Mercies*, in *not being humble, honest*, and *upright in your dealings*, or in omitting any *other Duties*. So that you must not think all is well with you when you keep away, as if you had done nothing. If the true Cause why you abstain'd was your *well meant mistake* about it, and your not knowing, after all the search you had opportunity to make, that every Good man, who Repents of all his Sins, is worthy and fit for it: God will wink at your *Ignorance* whilst it lasted; but that will be no excuse to you now you are *better informed*, so that now you will be Guilty of a Damning Offence, if you still neglect it after you are told of it. But if you have absented hitherto out of a *careless Spirit*, which would not attend the times, or be at the pains to come to it; or because you have an *Impenitent Heart*, which will not promise that Amendment and New Life, that is to be undertaken for and ingaged in it: Then has your Absenting been your Damning Sin, which has provoked God against you, as all other Acts of Disobedience and Irreligion. If this is your Case, you must look upon your selves all this while to have been in a great Fault, which God will not forgive till you Repent and amend it. For God will forgive

give you this Sin of neglecting the Sacrament, upon the same condition whereon he will forgive all others, namely, when you *forsake* it, and *turn away* from it, and, instead of absenting, learn to frequent it. So that if you would keep a *Good Conscience towards God*, and *dye in Peace*, and have no *unrepented sins* to answer for at the last Judgment: Every one of you, that has sinfully sleighted this Sacrament hitherto, must come to it henceforward, and, according to your Saviour Christs Commandment, readily partake in it, when you are called thereto.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the Benefits of Communicating.

The Contents.

The Sacrament is full of Bleſſings, which make it not only our Duty, but our Priviledge. In the General, *it is the moſt effectual means in all Religion to recommend our Prayers, and make them powerful; and ſo is the likelieſt way to attain all Mercies.* In particular, 1. *It Seals to us the Pardon of our Sins for the Peace of our Conſciences.* 2. *It encreaſes and Confirms in us all Graces. Thoſe are ordinarily ſuch as we bring along with us. It confers Grace,* 1. *By the Natural Virtue and Tendency of thoſe Duties, which it both exerciſes and excites in us.* 2. *By thoſe inward Aſſiſtances, which it conveys to us. Since on all theſe accounts it is ſo excellent a means of Grace and New Life, 'tis the beſt Rule any Perſon can obſerve who would go on in the Work of Repentance.*

tance. All these Motives to Communicate, both from Duty and Interest, summ'd up.

HAving shewn in the *former Chapter* how much it is *every Christians Duty to frequent the Holy Sacrament*, who is of *Age* to come to it, and how greatly they *sin* against God who *neglect* it, both from the *obliging Nature of the thing*, and Christs *express Commandment:* I proceed now in this,

4*ly*, To shew *what great inducements we have to it*, and *how great the Benefits are that come by it, which should make us press to it of our own Choice were it not Commanded.*

The Holy Sacrament has Blessings enow within it self to recommend it to our choice, if God had not interposed his Authority, and laid that weight upon it which he has. It is fully stored with Benefits, which make it, not only a *strict Duty*, but an *high Priviledge* to come to it, as the *Christian Church* has always thought, whose *great Penalty* lay in a *Separation*, or *Exclusion* from it. It is not only a matter of Honour to God, but also of highest Advantage to our selves; so that in all Reason we ought to seek it, and heartily thank God that we may be admitted to it, out of a care of our own Happiness and pure Self-interest. Of

Of these *Benefits* I have mentioned some already, such as its being a *vouchsafement of highest Honour* to us, and a *token of Gods greatest Love* for us, and a *certain pledge of our Future Glories*, of all which I have Discoursed in the last Chapter. But besides them, it is full of many other *singular Blessings* and *present Graces*, which I shall now treat of in *this*. And those, which I shall take notice of, are these.

1*st*, In the General, *It is the most effectual means in all Religion to recommend our Prayers, and make them Powerful with God*; so that 'tis *the likeliest way to obtain all Mercies.*

2*ly*, In Particular.

1*ly*, It *Seals to us the Pardon of our Sins for the Peace of our Consciences.*

2*ly*, It *encreases and confirms in us all our Graces.*

1*st*, In the General, *It is the most effectual means in all Religion to recommend our Prayers, and make them Powerful with God*; so that 'tis *the likeliest way to obtain all Mercies.* And this it doth, by being a *Commemoration unto him* of *the death of Christ*, which is the only Argument that prevails with him to bestow them on us.

It is the common way of all men when they sue for kindnesses from others, and think they have not Interest enough

ſelves, to uſe ſuch Interceſſions, and ſuggeſt ſuch things, as have moſt Power with them, and are likelieſt to incline them to grant their Deſires. And as it is thus in our Requeſts to *men*, ſo is it in our Prayers to *God* too. We ſet thoſe Conſiderations before his Eyes, and ſuggeſt thoſe things to his Remembrance, which are fitteſt to move his Pity, and to make him favourable towards us. Thus the Holy men in the *Old Teſtament* in their Prayers are frequently putting God in mind of his † *Covenant* and *Promiſe*; and making mention of his Servant * *David*, or † *Abraham*, or *Iſaac*, or *Iſrael*, for whom they knew he had an eſpecial kindneſs: and with their *Prayers* they uſed to joyn *Sacrifice*, hoping to be the eaſier heard when they came with their Atonement in their Hands, and that the Life of the Beaſt being offer'd up in Commutation, and accepted inſtead of theirs, God would be the eaſier appeaſed, and more inclined to hear their Supplications. Upon which account, that their Prayers might have a Powerful Argument to recommend them going along with them, they were careful to offer them up at the *hour of Sacrifice*,

† Pſal. 119. 49. 2 Chron. 6. 42.

* Pſal. 132. 1. 10.
† Deut. 9. 27. *and* Exod. 32. 13.

crifice, as appears from the Prayer of † *Ezra*, and of * *David*, at the *Evening Sacrifice*.

† Ezra 9. 5.
* Pſal. 141. 2.

Now that which Powerfully *intercedes* with God for us, and which was ſhadowed out by all the *Jewiſh Sacrifices*, is our *Saviours Death*. For it was his *Blood* that *merited* ſo highly at Gods hands, as to make him think of ſhewing Favour, and being kind to us. *It is the Blood of Propitiation*, Rom. 3. 25; that *makes peace between God and Men*, Col. 1. 20, and *ſpeaks better things than the Blood of* Abel, calling for Life and Salvation, as that did for Deſtruction, *Heb.* 12. 24. And 'tis the *Repreſentation of that Blood* now in *heavenly places*, that *gives Chriſt himſelf ſuch abſolute Power with God*, and makes him ſure to prevail whenſoever he *intercedes* for us. For *by it he entered into the Holy Place*, *where the Mercy-ſeat or Propitiatory was*, Heb. 9. 3, 5. 12. 24; and where *he ever lives to make interceſſion for us.* Heb. 7. 25. So that the great Argument, which either *Chriſt our high Prieſt* now in *Heaven* offers for us, or which in our Prayers we can plead for our ſelves, is his *own Death* and *Sufferings*.

Now this is ſet before God in every *Prayer*, and in *all Acts of Religion*; in all

which we uſe *Chriſts Name*, and deſire to be heard, and hope to prevail through *his Mediation*. But in the *Sacrament* it is done *more perfectly*, and with *greater Solemnity*, and that too by *Gods own appointment*. For one chief end of the Holy Sacrament, is to *Commemorate the Death of Chriſt*; *i. e.* to ſet it out in ſolemn ſhew, and make mention of it, not only before *men*, but alſo to *Almighty God*. *This do in Remembrance* or † Commemoration *of me*, ſays our Saviour, *Luc.* 22. 19. And *as oft as ye do it*, ſays St. *Paul*, *ye ſhew forth the Lords Death*, *i. e.* both to *God* and *Men*, *till he come*. 1 Cor. 11. 26.

† εἰς ἀνάμνησιν.

Thus do we no where ſo livelily and advantageouſly ſet out this great Argument of being heard, as in the Holy Sacrament: which we may juſtly hope will be the more obſerved, and have the more effect, becauſe it is not done of our own heads, but by Gods own ſpecial Direction and Appointment. And where the Argument is moſt advantageouſly ſet out, we may expect the better effect, and greater force from it. And this the *Ancient Chriſtians* thought, accounting their Prayers were not like to be ſo Powerful at any time, as when this Commemoration

on of Christs Death, the only Plea for being heard, accompanied them. And therefore at the Sacrament they † used to pray, not only for *themselves*, but also for *all others*, and to recommend any Person or thing to God which was dear to them, thinking they could never so advantageously, as at that time, sue for them.

† *Thus 'tis in the form prescribed* Constit. Apostol. l. 8. c. 13. & 15. p. 484, 485. tom. prim. Concil. ed. Lab. *And this* Eusebius *testifies* de vita Constant. l. 4. c. 45.

Thus in the General, is the Holy Sacrament a most *likely means to obtain for us all Mercies*, because it is the most *effectual course in all Religion* to *recommend our Prayers*, which must procure them for us.

2*dly*, In Particular,

1*st*, It *seals to us the Pardon of our Sins for the peace of our Consciences.*

2*ly*, It *increases and confirms in us all our Graces.*

1*st*, It *seals and confirms to us the Pardon of our Sins for the peace of our Consciences.* In the Holy Sacrament God calls us to give us a *full Pardon*, by giving us that Blood which was † *shed for the remission of Sins*, and which is the *Blood of Expiation*: and

† Mat. 26. 28.

having received that at his hand, if we are true Penitents, we need not doubt but that our ſins are expiated, and he is reconciled. The Sacrament it ſelf, as we have ſeen, is nothing leſs than a *ſolemn Confirmation of the New Covenant*, which promiſes Remiſſion of Sin to all that truly repent of it. So that when with Penitent Hearts we come to joyn in it, we come to ſtipulate and ſecure a Pardon of all our Offences, which will give us all the ſecurity of it that Covenants and Promiſes can make us. Whenſoever we Repent, indeed, we have Gods promiſe of Forgiveneſs, which may comfort our hearts after any Sin, not only in the *Communion*, but in *every Penitential Prayer and Confeſſion*. But in the Sacrament this Promiſe is again repeated, and in moſt ſolemn manner Sealed and Confirmed; to ſhew us that God is ſtill of the ſame mind, and to give us a *renewed* and a *ſenſible* aſſurance of it. And when God has thus ſet his Seal to it, and a Penitent Soul has juſt received his Word and Bond for it; it need not queſtion but he is reconciled, and, unleſs it ſtarts back from theſe penitential engagements, and falls afreſh into new Provocations, will always continue ſo to be.

And thus the Sacrament is the moſt effectual

fectual means, to calm the Fears, and quiet the Conſciences of all true penitents. If once they make ſure of their own Repentance after any Fault, it doth that in an *ordinary* way, which an *Angel from Heaven*, and a *ſpecial Revelation* would do in *extraordinary*, i. e. *it lets them know their Sins are Pardoned, and that God is their Friend.* For therein they receive from him the *Blood of Expiation*, a plain proof their Sins are atoned for and forgiven: and therein there is an expreſs agreement and *ſolemn Covenant of Peace and Reconciliation* between God and them, which is confirmed by this Feaſt of his own preſcribing: and having this Inſtrument of his own appointment, which they may look upon as his Hand and Seal to it, they may chearfully depend upon it, and reſt ſatisfied in their own mind.

2*ly.* It *increaſes and confirms in us all our Graces.*

Theſe Graces are *ordinarily* ſuch as we *bring along with us*, which we either have already *practiſed*, or are *fully purpoſed* and *reſolved ſo to do.* For therein God gives Grace only to the *Worthy Communicants*; and thoſe Communicants only are *Worthy*, who *Repent of all their Sins*, and are wholly determined to lead a New Life in Obedience to all his Commandments. It is

not a Sacrament intended to give ſtrength in Grace, to thoſe that have nothing of it; for it is our *Spiritual Meat* and *Bread*, as our Saviour calls it, *Joh.* 6. 51, 55. the uſe whereof is not to give *Life to a Dead Perſon*, but *Strength* and *Nouriſhment to a Living*. It is not deſigned to turn an Impenitent Man into a true Penitent, or to make an Ill man Good; for every impenitently ill man is an Unworthy Receiver, and eats his *own Damnation*, which is a *Curſe* and not a *Bleſſing*; ſo that he is not the better, but the worſe by it. But it is intended to make a *Good* Man *Better*, to carry on Repentance in thoſe that have begun it, and to confirm and enlarge every Virtue in thoſe who are already poſſeſſed of it. If we come to it with *Faith*, or *Belief of the Scriptures*, particularly of Gods promiſes to *pardon* our Sins for Chriſts ſake upon our *Repentance*, and to *help us to any Graces* upon our *indeavours*, and to make us *Eternally happy* upon our *entire Obedience*; it *ſtrengthens* and *aſſures* it: if with *Love of our dear Lord*, who dyed for us; it *increaſes* it: if with *Thankfulneſs* for his kindneſſes, particularly that of giving his own Life for ours; it makes us *more ſenſible* of it: if with *hearty Repentance*, and full purpoſe of amending all our Sins; it makes us more

unmoveable

unmoveable and *ſettled* in it: if with *Peace*, and *Charity towards all our Neighbours*; it fills us with a *greater abundance* of it. It augments all the Virtues of a Good man which he brings to it, making him more perfect in them, and ſtrong in Spirit to perſevere and go through with them. But theſe Effects it has not upon an ill man, nor produces this increaſe of Virtue in thoſe, who bring nothing of it along with them: So that 'tis no diſparagement to the Virtue of this Sacrament, if wicked Men find themſelves wicked ſtill, and not at all amended by their Receipt of it, ſince it was not ordained for their Improvement. It was not meant to give *Grace* to thoſe that are *Graceleſs*, or to give *Repentance* to *Impenitent* Perſons: but to carry them through in their Repentance who have fully ſet upon it, and to enable them to lead a New Life who are reſolved to do it, and to ſtrengthen them to amend a Fault who are wholly bent to ſtrive againſt it, and to confer Grace on thoſe that have it, and make them more Gracious ſtill.

And this the Holy Sacrament is to every worthy Communicant. It conveys Grace into his Soul, and makes him ſtand more firm, and increaſe in every Virtue of a Chriſtian. It is an excellent means

to make him a better man, and to carry him on to improve in Duty and Holy living: So that every one who comes worthily, will gain a great increaſe of Grace and Strength, and be much ſet on in Spiritual growth by Receiving.

Now this it doth two ways.

1*ſt*, By the *Natural Virtue and Tendency of thoſe Duties, which it exerciſes and excites in us.*

2*ly*, By thoſe *inward Aſſiſtances, which it conveys to us.*

1*ſt*, A worthy Receiving conveys Grace into our Souls, and confirms and increaſes us in all Virtues, by the *Natural Efficacy and Tendency of thoſe Duties, which it exerciſes, and excites in us.* For *it excites*, and *therein we exerciſe* ſeveral Duties, which help on a good Life, and ſet it forward; and therein *we bind our ſelves by ſolemn Vows and Engagements* to go on in it: *both* which are moſt powerful to effect and improve it.

1*ſt*, *It excites*, and *therein we exerciſe ſeveral Duties, that help on a good Life, and ſet it forward.* All the Duties of worthy Receiving are inſtances of an Holy Life, as we have ſeen, and parts of a Good man: but ſeveral of them are not only *particular Duties* in *themſelves*, but withall moſt powerful *helps to the performance of*

of all others: So that in performing and improving them, we do not only diſcharge and grow in *ſome* Virtues; but make a way for our eaſier Diſcharge and fuller growth in *all others* alſo. And theſe are a *fixt Remembrance* and *firm Faith of Chriſts wonderful kindneſs* to us, eſpecially in *Dying* for us; an *intenſe Love*, and *hearty Thankfulneſs*, and *intire Reſignation* of our ſelves to his Service, and *true Repentance* and *Abhorrence* of all our Sins; all which, as they are much *improved in a worthy Communion*, ſo are they moſt *Powerful in helping us to become Obedient* and *Good men*.

1*ſt*. I ſay theſe Duties are *improved in us by the Holy Communion*. And this they are by being both *exerciſed*, and *excited* in us at that time.

They are *all exerciſed* in every Worthy Communicant at that time, becauſe in *them*, as we have ſeen, conſiſts the *worthineſs of Receiving*. And the more ſtill they are exerciſed, the more they are improved. For all *Habits* come by uſage, and Cuſtome makes thoſe things, which at firſt ſeemed ſtrange, to become, not only *Eaſie*, but *Natural* to us. So that in exerciſing them at the Sacrament, we ſhall improve and add to them, and go away with a greater meaſure of them, than

than we brought when we came.

And this we ſhall more eſpecially do, becauſe therein they are not only *exerciſed*, but mightily *excited* in us alſo. The Holy Sacrament ſuggeſts ſuch *Powerful Motives* to them, and preſents us with ſuch *obliging Reaſons* for them, as we cannot have any where elſe; ſo that we cannot take a better way, than by coming to it, to improve them. For therein we moſt *ſolemnly* and *attently remember*, how, *when our ſins had made us utter Enemies of God, and Heirs of Deſtruction, Chriſt laid down his own Life in our ſtead, and by that Ranſome redeemed us from it.* And this is not only the *higheſt*, but, in a manner, the *ſum total* of all thoſe inducements which can ingage us to theſe Virtues, or poſſeſs us with them. For what can poſſibly raiſe ſo *warm a Love of Chriſt* in an *ingenuous* Spirit, that is ſenſible of what is done to it, as to ſee how infinitely he has Loved us, and, when we were his bitter Enemies, gave his own Life in exchange for ours? What can ever ingage us to ſo great *Thankfulneſs*, as to think that a Perſon ſo far above us, and that ſtood in no need of us, and that was not ſought to by us, and that was even then moſt highly diſobliged and had received the greateſt Provocations from us, ſhould moſt

most frankly give his own self to do us a kindness? What can so powerfully move us to *resign up our selves* to any one, as to see that he has bestowed himself on us first to buy us off from our implacable Enemies, and that for no Self-Interests or By-Ends of his own, but purely for our Eternal Happiness? What can work in us so *hearty a Repentance*, and provoke us into so *utter an Indignation* and *Abhorrence* of all our Sins, as to behold in our dear Lords Agonies what they deserv'd, and how unmeasurably mischievous they proved, and what inexpressible Tortures they brought on him, when he would put himself in our place, and undertake to answer for us? These things are most livelily set out, and powerfully suggested to us in this Blessed Sacrament, one chief business whereof is solemnly to Commemorate and make mention of them: and they are the most effectual means to raise in us a constant mindfulness, a zealous and intense Love of him that dyed for us, and an hearty Thankfulness for all his kindnesses, and a sincere Repentance and utter abhorrence of all our Sins, and an intire Resignation of our selves to his Use and Service, that can be given us. And the Sacrament being thus richly furnished with the most per-

perſwaſive Motives, and thus vividly ſuggeſting to us the moſt Powerful Reaſons for all theſe Virtues; it muſt needs be the beſt Courſe to improve in them, and we cannot lay out our time upon them better, or to more effect, in any other way.

Thus are the Duties of a fixt Remembrance and firm Faith of Chriſts dying for us, of an intenſe Love, and hearty Thankfulneſs, and Reſignation of our ſelves to his Service, and true Repentance and Abhorrence of all our Sins; very much ſet on and improved in all worthy Receivers by the Holy Communion. They will be heightned and increaſed by receiving, becauſe they are both *exerciſed*, and, by an *objective Repreſentation* of moſt *forcible inducements* to them, powerfully *excited* in them at that time.

And as theſe Duties are all improved by the Holy Communion; ſo are they,

2ly, *Moſt Powerful in helping us to become Obedient and Good men.* If we were but perfect in theſe Virtues, and they had once got the Aſcendant over us, and ruled in our Hearts; they would have an Univerſal influence on all others, and govern our whole Lives. For if, when we are tempted to any ſin, our *minds*, being familiarized

miliarized to it, would at that inſtant readily *ſuggeſt* to us that *Chriſt dyed* for it, and that it put him to all the pain and anguiſh he ſuffered; we ſhould not *endure to come near it*: If we have any *true Love* and *Zeal* for him, we ſhall ſhew no manner of *Favour* or *Compliance with it*; if we are really *Thankful* for what he has done, for *his ſake we ſhall withſtand* it; if we are *reſign'd* up to his uſe, we ſhall have *nothing to do with it*, becauſe *he* is *againſt* it; and if we *abhor* it for the pains it put him to when he anſwer'd for it, and will at laſt put us to alſo if we continue in it, we ſhall *diſdainfully reject* and *turn away* from it. If we *Believe* and remember always, as we have need, that Chriſt died for our Sins, and procured us Pardon for them upon our Repentance, and Grace to get quit of them upon our beſt indeavours; that *Faith* will make us *Obedient*, and carry us on to amend them. If we truly *Love* Chriſt, that Love will make us *do ſomething for him*, and caſt to pleaſe and † obey him. If we are *Thankful* for what is done, we ſhall never deſpite him by any Sin, which for all his *Benefits* were to return the greateſt *injuries* again. If we are *reſign'd* up to his uſe, we ſhall *Faithfully ſerve* him. If we

† Joh. 14. 15.

are

are *heartily Penitent*, and *abhor* our Sins, we shall *forsake* them. If we have this lively Faith and Remembrance of Christs dying for us, and this intense Love, and hearty Thankfulness, and entire Resignation of our selves to his Service, and sincere Repentance, and utter Abhorrence of all our Sins; If we have *these Virtues*, I say, and in these *prevailing measures*, they will carry us on to an Holy Life, and make us Obedient to all Gods Commandments. And therefore since this Holy Sacrament, when 'tis worthily received, doth so much improve these Virtues in us; it must needs help us on, and improve us in all others, and in the whole course of a good Life too.

Thus doth a worthy receiving by its own *Natural tendency* confirm and increase us in all good Living, by our *exercising*, and its *exciting* in us such Duties, as help it on and set it forward: and so doth it,

2*ly*, By our *binding our selves thereat in solemn Vows, and Ingagements to go on in it.*

One *chief end* of our meeting at this Feast, and *prime part* of our Worthiness in partaking of it, is to *confirm the New Covenant*, as we have seen, and to make God our Faithful promises, that from that day we will amend all our Faults, that so we may attain that Pardon and Happi-

Happineſs, which, upon our true Repentance, he comes to offer and aſſure to us. And theſe *ſolemn Vows* and *Promiſes* are a faſt hank upon us to make us leave our Sins, and do all that he requires of us. For every man *ought*, and thinks himſelf *concerned* to be as good as his word, and to perform what he has promiſed; eſpecially when 'tis to one, who is too *Wiſe* to be *deluded*, and too *Juſt* and *Powerful* to ſuffer any abuſes of him to paſs *unrevenged*, which all men, that underſtand any thing, believe of *Almighty God*. When we Promiſe and Vow to him, we know that he *cannot be deceived*, and that he *will not be mocked*; ſo that we muſt needs ſee it ſtands us in ſtead, and is our higheſt concern to perform with him. And therefore, ſince in the Sacrament we do in the moſt ſolemn manner Vow to amend our ways, and promiſe an Holy Life to Almighty God; in Regard none that are *honeſt will*, and none that are *wiſe* and *ſerious dare* be unmindful of ſuch ſacred and ſolemn Compacts, *it* muſt needs be an excellent way to bind it faſt upon our Souls, and fix it in our minds, and ſo help very much to eſtabliſh and imprint it in us.

And thus we ſee how a worthy receiving conveys Grace, and confirms and increaſes

increaſes in us all Virtues by the *Natural tendency* of thoſe Duties, which it *exerciſes*, and *excites* in us. For *it powerfully excites*, and therein *we exerciſe ſeveral Duties*, which *help on a Good Life*, and *ſet it forward*; and *bind our ſelves by ſolemn Vows and Ingagements to go on in it*, *both* which are moſt Powerful to improve and effect it.

And as it thus confirms and increaſes in us all Graces, by the *Natural* Virtue and *Tendency* of thoſe Duties, which it *excites* in us; ſo does it,

2ly, By *thoſe inward Aſſiſtances*, *which it miniſters and conveys to us.*

This Sacrament doth not only confer Grace by its *Natural Tendency*, as other means; but moreover, by virtue of *Gods Promiſe* and *eſpecial Bounty* to the Worthy Receivers of it, as it is an Inſtrument in his hands. He tells us that he will do great things at the preſence of it, and be liberal in Spiritual Bleſſings to all that duly partake in it: So that beſides what they do from the Virtues themſelves, which are exerciſed thereat, they may promiſe themſelves much Spiritual Grace and Strength from his Free Gift, and immediate concurrence with it. For in the Sacrament he offers them all that outward Grace and Spiritual ſtrength, which

which Christs Death procured; and therefore, if they come to it worthily, so as their own unworthiness is no bar against it, that offer will be sure to take effect, and they shall undoubtedly receive it. And this is plainly intimated to us, when our *Saviour* tells us of *his Flesh* that it is *Bread*, the true use and end whereof is for † *support* and *nourishment*, Joh. 6. 51. And when St. *Paul* declares, that *the Cup of Blessing which we Bless, is the Communion*, or † Communicating to us *the Blood of Christ*, *i. e.* those Benefits his Blood procured us: and that *the Bread which we break, is the Communion*, or Communicating to us *the Body of Christ*, *i. e.* those Graces which the offering of his Body obtain'd for us, amongst † which are these *Spiritual Assistances*, 1 Cor. 10. 16. And when our *Lord* himself tells us, that the *Bread* he gives us *is his Body*, and that the *Cup* he reaches out to us *is his Blood*, Mat. 26. 26, 28. By which, though he mean not that they are his Body and Blood in their *Natures*, yet the least he can mean is, that they are so in their *Effects*, so that when we receive them we receive all the Blessings of his

† Psal. 104. 15.

† Κοινωνία.

† Gal. 3. 13, 14.

Blood.

Blood-shedding, and all that Grace which his Death has purchased for all Men.

And thus the *Church* of Christ has still thought concerning it. † *In the Sacrament*, says St. *Ambrose*, *thou receivest the similitude of the Body of Christ*, *i. e.* the Bread and Wine which represent it: *but, together with that, all the Grace and Virtue which the true and real Body obtained.* * *This Sacramental Food*, says St. *Cyprian*, or whoever was the Author of that Tract, *is in outward appearance a bodily Substance; but by invisible Efficiency it works all the Effects of a Divine Power and Presence.* † *They that partake of the Eucharist by Faith*, says St. *Clement* of *Alexandria*, *are sanctified thereby both in Body and Soul.* And * *we eat the Bread*, says *Origen*, *which by Prayer is made the Body of Christ*, *Holy*

† Ideo in similitudinem quidem accipis Sacramentum, sed veræ Naturæ gratiam, virtutemque consequeris. *Ambros. de Sacram. l. 6. c. 1.*

* Sed immortalitatis alimonia datur, à communibus cibis Differens, Corporalis substantiæ retinens speciem, sed virtutis Divinæ invisibili efficientia probans adesse præsentiam. *Cyp. de Cœna Dom. sub init*

† Ἐυχαριςία κέκληται· ἧς οἱ κατὰ πίςιν μεταλαμβανόντες, ἁγιάζονται καὶ σῶμα καὶ ψυχήν. *Clem. Alex. Pædag. l. 2. c. 2. p. 151. Ed Par.*

* Ἄρτυς ἐσθίομεν, σῶμα γενο-

Holy in it self, and making those Holy who feed on it with Resolutions of New Life and Holy Purpose.

μένους διὰ τὴν εὐχὴν, ἅγιόν τι, καὶ ἁγιάζον τοὺς μετ' ὑγιοῦς προθέσεως αὐτῷ χρωμένους. *Orig. cont. Cels. l. 8. p. Ed. Cant.* 399.

And this is another way, whereby the worthy Receiving of the Sacrament confirms and Augments in us all Spiritual Graces; *viz. As it is an Instrument in Gods Hands, who, at the presence of it, ministers and conveys them to us.*

And by this it appears that the Holy Sacrament confirms and increases us in all Graces, both by the *Natural Virtue* and *Tendency* of those Duties, which it *excites* and *improves* in us; and also by those *inward Assistances* and *Spiritual Aids*, which it *ministers* and *conveys* to us.

And thus we see how the Holy Sacrament is full of Grace and a quickning Spirit, and helps mightily to set us on in an Holy Life, and in the work of Reformation and Amendment. And therefore when any Persons turn *Penitents*, and resolve to lead new Lives; *one* of the *best Rules* that can be given them is to frequent it. For it will carry them forward in their work, and, what by the Natural Tendency of the Duties themselves that are exercised in it, what by the Assistances that

that are conveyed by it, increaſe their Strength, and give them Power to go through with it. It will perfect them in Obedience by *exerciſing*, and *exciting*, and by both *improving* in them that *Faith*, *Love*, *Thankfulneſs*, *Reſignation*, and *Repentance*, which are the moſt Genuine *Principle* and Effectual cauſe of it. It will bind it upon their Souls and ingage them to it, by their *repeating* every time they are at it, their *ſolemn Vows* and *ſacred Promiſes* to go on in it. And it will inable them to ſucceed in it, by bringing down from God thoſe *inward Helps* and *Spiritual Aſſiſtances*, which ſhall bear them through it. So that if any man begins to look towards God, and longs to go forward with the work of Reformation and Amendment: He ought in all Reaſon to ſeek out, and preſs in to be admitted to the Holy Sacrament. For it is one of the beſt Rules that can be preſcribed in his Caſe, and ſerves his end above any thing: and therefore *he* muſt not in any wiſe ſhun it, but lay out for it above all men living. A man that will not Repent, indeed, whilſt he continues in that mind, muſt not come to it; for he would not receive Good, but hurt by it. But if he reſolves to amend his ways, and ſeeks out for help, and would make uſe of any means

means which would do him moſt Service in effecting it: let him be conſtant at the Lords Table, and frequently Communicate. It will quicken him when once he is in the way to become Good, and amend his pace where he has need to be ſet forward, and ſtrengthen him in thoſe Parts where he is weak and moſt lyable to be aſſaulted, as St. *Ignatius* told the *Epheſians*, when he adviſed them to be frequent in it; ſaying,

† *Shew haſte to aſſemble often in the Euchariſt; for the oftner you meet in it, the more your ſtanding is ſecured, and the Power of Satan is deſtroyed.* It will fortifye him in all Tryals wherein he is like to be moſt endanger'd; enlivening in him that *Holy Zeal*, and *ſteady Purpoſe*, and *other Graces*, which muſt bear him through it; for which cauſe it was uſed *anciently*, and upon a like occaſion would be ſo ſtill, as a *Preparation* for the *greateſt Tryals*, and to fit men to *Dye Martyrs for the Cauſe of Chriſt.*

† Σπουδάζετε πυκνότερον συνίστασθαι εἰς εὐχαριστίαν θεοῦ καὶ εἰς δόξαν· ὅταν γὰρ πυκνῶς ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ γίνησθε, καθαιροῦνται αἱ δυνάμεις τοῦ Σατανᾶ. *Ignat. Ep. ad Epheſ. Ed. Voſſ. p. 25.*

† *Thoſe*, ſays St. *Cyprian* and the other *African* Biſhops, *whom we*

† Quos excitamus & hortamur ad prælium, non

would

inermes & nudas relinquamus, ſed protectione Sanguinis, & Corporis Chriſti muniamus: Et cum ad hoc fiat Euchariſtia, ut poſſit accipientibus eſſe tutela, quos tutos eſſe contra adverſarium voluimus, munimento Dominicæ Saturitatis armemus. *Cyp. & alii Epiſc. in Epiſt. Synod. Eccleſ. Afric. ad Eccleſ. Roman. Ep. 57. Ed. Oxon. 54. Pamel.*

would preſerve ſafe and invulnerable againſt the fierceſt Darts of the Adverſaries, we arm firſt with the Lords Supper, wherewith they may be guarded as with a ſhield, and wherein they may be ſecured as in an impregnable fortreſs. It is an excellent means of confirming every Grace, and affording Spiritual Help and Strength to all that want it: and that is inducement enough, were there no Command for it, for every man, who deſires to be intirely good and ſtrong in Spirit, to reſort to it.

And thus at laſt it appears what thoſe Bleſſings are which come by the Sacrament, and which are ſufficient to ingage all good Souls to preſs to it of themſelves, though it had no where been commanded. For it is a *moſt effectual means to prevail with God in all their Prayers and thereby to obtain all Mercies*, it *Seals to them the pardon of their ſins for the Peace of their Conſciences*, and *Confirms* and *Augments in them all their Graces.* So that if

if they have, I will not ſay any *Duty* and *Service for their Saviour*, but any *Love of themſelves* and *care of their own Souls*, they will ſeek to be admitted, and come haſtily when they are called thereto.

To conclude this point then, the ſum of what I have ſaid to ingage mens preſence at *this Feaſt*, and to *Communicate as often as an opportunity is offered*, amounts to this: It is their *Duty to come to the Communion*, as much as it is to *come to Church*, to be *Temperate*, *Humble*, *Juſt*, or to perform any other *Precepts* of their *Religion*. For they have *Chriſts expreſs Command for it*; who by injoyning it, has *required Obedience in ſuch an Inſtance, as beſt ſhews their peculiar Reverence and Love to him*; and to ingage them to it, has *freed them from all the load of* Jewiſh *Ceremonies, and impoſed no heavier Burden, than it, and Baptiſm, inſtead of them*; and to make it take the more effect, *left it among the laſt Words which he ſpake to them*; and to ſhew it is a matter of no ſmall moment, would have it *expreſly ſpecified in St.* Paul's *Commiſſion*; and tells them, that *unleſs they come therein to eat his Fleſh and drink his Blood, they have no Life in them*; and *will puniſh the neglect, or abuſe of it, as he did of the* Jewiſh *Paſſover, which anſwered*

to it, with Excision. And the *Nature* of *those things which are meant* by it, and wherein they are to imploy their minds when they are present at it, most *straitly oblige* them to it. For therein they shew they have *Fellowship with Christ*, and appertain to *his Religion*, and *thankfully remember him*, and *Seal the New Covenant with God*, and a *League of Love and Friendship with their Brethren*, and are *vouchsafed the highest Honour*, and *receive Tokens of the greatest Love*, and *injoyment of present Graces*, and *Pledges of Future Glories* from him; which are things that every *Ingenuous* man *will*, and every *Good* man *ought* to do when he is call'd to them, and no man can honestly refuse or decline, who professes himself a *Christian*. These things *oblige* all those who are of *Age* for it, and have an *opportunity* and *fit occasion offer'd*, and have *no lawful Let* or *Impediment*, of *Providential hindrances*, *sickness*, or other thing, which would excuse their coming to *Prayers* or *other Ordinances* of Christ; they oblige all such, I say, to come to this Feast when they are call'd to it. And, if after they are shewn how much it is their Duty to joyn in it, and how Repentance make them

them worthy of it, through *Careleſneſs*, or *Impenitence* they ſtay away from it; they *ſin againſt God*, and are Guilty of a *Damning Fault*, which will not be forgiven them till they *Repent* of it and *amend* it. But if there were no *Guilt* in the *Neglect*, and to Communicate had not been thus required; yet would the *Bleſſings of the thing it ſelf* have ingaged every *Penitent Good Man to preſs in to be admitted.* For it is the *moſt effectual courſe in all Religion to prevail with God*, and to *be heard in all their Prayers*; it *Seals to them the Pardon of their Sins, for the Peace of their Conſciences*; and *Confirms and Augments in them all their Graces*; bringing down ſuch help as may make them ſtand in all Tryals, and carrying them on, beyond any means that can be preſcribed, in the courſe of Repentance and new Obedience: which to all that love the eaſe of their own Minds, and have any care of their own Souls, are invitation more than enough to ingage their preſence at this Ordinance; and as for thoſe that do not, they are neither to be won by *them*, nor by any *others.*

And thus having ſhewn *what is the meaning of eating Bread and drinking Wine in the Bleſſed Sacrament*, and *wherein lies the Worthineſs of doing it*, and *how much it*

is every Good Christians Duty to frequent it, and *what great Benefits there are that come by it*, *which should make us press to it of our selves were it not Commanded*: I shall proceed now,

5*ly*, In the *last* Place, to *consider those Excuses*, and *to take off those Pleas*, *which are most usually made against it*; of which in the *next* Part.

Part III.

PART III.

Of the Hindrances that keep men from the Communion.

CHAP. I.

Two Hindrances from Communicating.

The Contents.

One moſt General Hindrance, that keeps men from the Sacrament, is a Fear of their being Unworthy and Unfit to receive it. This Anſwer'd by ſhewing, 1. *The Partiality of it, becauſe they are not ſo ſcrupulous about Neglecting, as about Unworthy Receiving, though there be the ſame cauſe for it.* 2. *That every true Penitent is worthy of it: Yea, he that has only fully purpoſed Amendment, though he has not had time to perform it.* 3. *Impeni-*

tence, which unfits them for it, is no Excuse for the Neglect of it. 4. Impenitent men, who alone are unfit, if they understand the danger of their State, cannot continue in it but amend it, and then they may worthily Communicate. 2. A Second *Hindrance is, because an Unworthy Receiver eats his own Damnation,* 1 Cor. 11. 29. *which makes not Receiving seem the safer side. By Damnation is meant, 1. A Damning Sin, which is deadly till we Repent of it; and such are both unworthy eating and sinful abstaining, so that they are equal as to that point. 2. Temporal Penalties, which were inflicted for their Intemperance at this Feast, and other Disorders peculiar to those Times, and are not now usual in ours, so that the fear of them need not discourage us from it.*

SInce a worthy receiving of the Holy Sacrament is a *Duty* which our Blessed *Lord* has so *straitly injoyn'd*, and from which *we* may all hope to reap so *great Benefit*, as has been shewed; it may well be expected, that all who would do Service either to their *Saviour*, or to *themselves*, should readily join in it whensoever an Opportunity is offer'd. And so, 'tis like, all that pretend to serious Religion would, were it not that they have

have ſome Exceptions in their own minds againſt it, which, till they are removed, make all Diſcourſes of the *Duty* or *Uſefulneſs* of it fall without effect, and perſwade them, that, however *neceſſary* or *adviſeable* it may be to *others*, yet it is not ſo to *them*, who have ſo *juſt* an hindrance to excuſe or diſcourage them from being preſent at it.

To give this Duty as faſt hold as I can therefore on the *Conſciences* of all thoſe, who ſhall peruſe this *Treatiſe*; having already ſet forth the *indiſpenſable Obligations we have to it*, I ſhall now proceed to *remove thoſe Hindrances, and to take off thoſe Pleas, which are offer'd to excuſe, and keep men back from complying with it.* And as for *them*, the moſt weighty and conſiderable, which I have been able to learn, or have had opportunity to meet with, are ſuch as follow.

Men are moſt ordinarily hindred from the Sacrament, notwithſtanding it is ſo much both their *Duty* and their *Intereſt* to frequent it, by *one*, or other of theſe things.

1*ſt*, Becauſe *they think themſelves unworthy of it, and unfit to receive it.*

2*ly*, Becauſe of *the great danger of Unworthy Communicating, Damnation being ſaid to be eaten in it, which ſeems to make abſtaining the ſafer ſide.*

3*ly*, Because *therein they are to promise concerning every Sin they find themselves guilty of, that they will no more commit it; and this Promise they dare not make, because they fear they shall not keep it.*

4*ly*, Because of *the great difficulty they apprehend to be in worthy receiving, and their want of time and leisure to prepare for it.*

5*ly*, Because *they see others, or have found themselves, to be no whit bettered or improved by it; so that 'tis not worth their while to fit themselves for it.*

6*ly*, Because *they have not that Charity for all the World, which is to be professed in it.*

7*ly*, Because, *though they be with others, yet others are not in Charity with them; and therefore they fear they want that Peace which is required to it.*

8*ly*, Because *it is a Presumption in us to approach it, and therefore an humble man should abstain from it.*

9*ly*, Because *many Good People are seldome or never seen at it, and therefore they may be Good too, and have Good Company, if they keep away from it.*

10*ly*, Because *others that are unworthy of it, are admitted to joyn in it.*

11*ly*, and Lastly, Because *though they ought, and would come to the Sacrament; yet they would not Kneel, which is the*

Posture

Posture appointed by the Church wherein they are to receive it.

These are such things, as do most *ordinarily* hinder Good People from partaking in this Ordinance; but indeed they ought in no case to be their hindrance from doing their Saviour, and their own Souls this Service, as will more fully appear from treating of all the *Particulars.*

1*st*, *One* Thing, that is the most *general* hindrance of all, and keeps back very many from the Sacrament, who otherwise are desirous enough to partake in it; is their *thinking themselves unworthy of it, and unfit to receive it.*

Now to silence this Plea, and to satisfie the minds of those that make it, so as there may be no more cause for it; I shall observe,

1st, *Their great Partiality in it*; because *they are not so Scrupulous about neglecting, as about unworthy receiving it, though there be the same cause to scruple it.*

2ly, *That every Penitent, who is resolved to leave his Sins, and has begun the change, is really worthy*; *so that the thoughts of unworthiness ought not to put him by it.*

3ly, *That Impenitence, the only thing which unfits them for it, is no excuse at all for their neglect of it.*

4ly, *That Impenitent men, who are un-*

worthy of it, if they understand the danger and misery of their State, can by no means continue in it, but must forthwith Repent and amend, and then this hindrance is gone, and they may worthily approach to it.

1st, I say, *They shew great Partiality in this Plea*, because *they are not so Scrupulous about Neglecting, as about the unworthy Receiving it, though there be the same cause to scruple it.* They shew all their niceness in *doing* what God bids them, but none in *letting of it alone*; they are afraid of offending in coming to the Sacrament, but have no Fear of giving Offence in staying away from it: as if God had only forbid them to receive unworthily, but had no where forbid them to absent themselves, and not receive at all.

But this, as I have already shewn, is a very wrong Judgment. For God doth as straitly *injoyn* a *Worthy*, as he *forbids* an *Unworthy* Communicating. He has given us his Command for it, and that too with such Notes and Circumstances above-mentioned, as shew he lays a particular weight upon it, and highly expects to be obeyed in it. So that if we would not bring Guilt upon our selves by sinning against him, we must make Conscience of *not coming* to the Sacrament, as well as of *irreverent Treating* and *Prophanation* of it when we come. This

This then is very *Partial* and *Unfair* dealing, to be ſcrupulous only about the *manner of Performing* this Duty, but to have no ſcruple at all about the *Omiſſion* of it: as if, when God Commands us to *do a thing*, *not to do it at all*, were not as much a Fault as *to do it wrong*; and it were not equally tranſgreſſed when we *Neglect*, as when we *Prophane* it. And if all thoſe, who are full of Fear about *Unworthy Receiving*, would be but as Fearful of *Sinful abſtaining*; this equal Fear on both ſides would make them diligent in ſeeking ſatisfaction, and in carrying on the Work of Preparation: ſo that they might neither offend by *coming*, nor by *ſtaying away*, but worthily approach the Lords Table, and be heartily welcome to it when they do.

2. *Every Penitent, who is Reſolv'd to leave his Sins, and has begun the Change, is really worthy; ſo that the thoughts of unworthineſs ought not to put him by it.*

He is a *true Penitent, who conſiders of all Gods Laws, and is reſolved to keep them; and of all his own Sins, and is reſolved to leave them: and ſo, changing his former evil Courſe and Practice, becomes a New Man.* And whoſoever doth this, he is a fit Perſon, and worthy to come to the Holy Communion. For all the particulars

lars of worthy Receiving, are Instances of Duty, as has been observ'd, and parts of a Good Man; so that every man, who turns Penitent and becomes Good, will be endowed with all of them. Nay, if any man were to learn them, there would be no difficulty in any thing else, if *Repentance* would go down with him: So that any Person who Repents, may do every thing else which God Requires of him. The great things expected of us at this Feast, as has been said, are these; namely, That we *give thanks for Christs Death*, and *resign our selves up to his Service*, and *Repent of all our Sins*, and be in *Love and Charity with all Persons*, and *have Faith in Christ and his Merits*: And all these are easie, and create no great difficulty to a Penitent Person. For is it not an easie thing for him to *thank Christ*, who verily believes he *dyed* for him? And cannot he readily *resign* himself up to his use, who has already given himself up to an *Holy Life*, which is all the use that he would make of him? And is not he in *Peace* and *Charity* with all men, who has *Repented* of all his Sins, and then surely of *Malice* and *Unpeaceableness* among them? And doth not he *believe in Christ*, *i. e.* doth not he *believe those things which his Saviour Christ has declared to him*,

him, viz. That *he dyed for us to purchase Terms of Grace*; and that now, for his sake, God will *forgive us any Sins*, when we *Repent* of them, and *help us by his Spirit* to any *Graces* when we *indeavour* after them, and *give us Eternal Life in Heaven* when we *intirely obey* him, but that *otherwise*, than upon *these Terms*, he will not give us any of them; which are those Declarations he makes to us in the *Scriptures*, and wherein he expects to be *trusted* and *believed* by us: doth not every *Penitent* man, I say, *believe* all this, who is at the pains to *live* according to it, and *Repents* that he may be *pardoned*, and *indeavours* that he may be *assisted*, and *obeys* that he may be *graciously rewarded* for it? All this *Faith*, which is required to the Communion, is *necessary to Repentance*, and is *shewn in it*; for we should not leave *Intemperance*, *Fraud*, *Malice*, or any *other* sin that is strongly recommended to us, unless we *believed* God had *forbid* it, and would now for Christs sake *freely forgive*, and *eternally Reward* those who *Repent* of it. And all this *Thankfulness*, and *Resignation*, and *Peace*, and *Charity* towards all men, which are likewise required, are not only *easie after* it, but are *parts of* it: for if we are *unthankful* for Christs Benefits, or *unresigned* to his use, or out

of

of *Charity* with any Persons, we have not yet *Repented* of *all* our sins, but, as to *these* at least, are still *Impenitent*. So that where once Repentance of all our sins is, there is or *may be* in us, every thing else, which God requires at this Feast to fit us worthily to partake of it.

Thus is every true Penitent fit to eat at the Table of his Lord, and to be a worthy Communicant. And therefore when any Persons do from their Hearts Repent them of all their sins, and are fully purposed to lead new Lives thence-forwards; let them not be afraid to come to the Sacrament, for they are truly such as God accounts worthy of it. If they have not shaken hands with their sins, indeed, but live still in them, and are ready to repeat them on the next occasion; they will come unworthily whilst they are in that state, and not be made the better, but the worse for it. But if they have broke loose from them, and have been acted by Gods Fear, and led new Lives for some time; and are still putting out more indeavours, and praying for more Grace to do this yet more perfectly: they are the Persons whom God calls to this Feast, and may justly expect to receive an hearty welcome at it.

Nay,

Nay, if their Return to God has been ſo late, as that they have not yet had time ſufficient for *well-doing*, but only for *holy purpoſing* that they will do well as often as they ſhall have occaſion: yet, if out of a *ſerious Conviction* of the *deteſtableneſs of every ſinful Courſe*, they are *reſolv'd to leave it*; and after a *due Conſideration of every part of their Duty*, they are *fully*, and *without all reſerve reſolved to practiſe it*; I doubt not, but that this *will* and *purpoſe*, before the time and opportunities for *Practice* come, will render them welcome Gueſts, and worthy to Communicate. For whatever Rigors afterwards came in, not from the *Nature of the Sacrament* it ſelf, or the *Neceſſity of the thing*, but only through the *Diſcretionary Power of the Church*, and the *Rules of Diſcipline*, thus I think 'tis plain it did in the *Apoſtles times*. For the *three thouſand Souls*, whom St. *Peter* Converted at *one Sermon*, did not ſtay till they had opportunities of *performing*; but were admitted that *very day*, upon their *inward change* and *reſolution*, to the *Apoſtles Fellowſhip*, and therein to the *Holy Sacrament*, which was a part of it. *They that gladly received his Word*, ſays St. *Luke*, *were Baptized: and the ſame day there were added unto them about three thouſand Souls.*

And

And all these *continued stedfastly in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayers*, Act. 2. 41, 42. And when the *Apostles* went about to Convert the World, they admitted men presently to *Baptism* and the *Christian Worship*, upon their *Profession of Faith in Christ* and being *Penitent*, without staying to see them *practise* what they had *promised*, as appears in the *Converts* now mentioned, and the story of the † *Eunuch*: and when they were admitted to the Christian Worship, they were admitted to the Communion too, because in the *Apostles* Days, as I have † shewn, that was an *ordinary* part of it, and always went along with it.

† Act. 8. 36, 37, 38.

† *Part* 1. *Chap.* 3.

If any Persons then have already left their sins, and do not *willingly* allow themselves in any of them; if they have been striving long against them, and are daily gaining ground, and making a more perfect conquest of them: Nay, if they, who, since their return to God, have not had time to *perform* all this, are yet *fully* and *deliberately purposed*, and without all *Reserve* resolv'd in themselves so to do; they are the Persons whom God invites

to

to this Feaſt, they are *worthy* to come to it, and will be ſure to meet with a kind and hearty entertainment. *God* and *they* are fully agreed in their own Thoughts, and the Terms of Reconciliation betwixt them are conſented to on *both* ſides: for he proclaims *Mercy* upon *Repentance*, and they thankfully accept it; he offers to return into Favour with every Sinner that will amend his Faults, and they are glad of the joyful News, and fully reſolve to do it. And ſince they are both agreed upon the thing, what ſhould hinder them from coming to the Sacrament, which he has appointed for this very end, that therein they may give their expreſs conſent to this Agreement, and mutually make this Declaration.

Thus is every man, who has left his ſins, and begun to lead a New Life; or, who is fully purpoſed in his own mind, and abſolutely intends ſo to do; a welcome Gueſt at this Feaſt, and worthy to Communicate: ſo that no apprehenſions of unworthineſs ought to put him by it.

And as for thoſe who neither have left all their ſins, nor are determined in their own hearts, and wholly bent upon it; they are plainly *Impenitent*, and thereupon moſt unworthy to Communicate. But then,

3*ly*, *That Impenitence*, *which unfits them for*

for it, is no excuse at all for the neglect of it.

Impenitence will excuse a man in no act, but is it self a very great aggravation of it. It is no *extenuating Plea*, but a *Damning Fault*; so that no man must ever hope to escape the easier after he has omitted any Duty, by giving it as the Reason for it. When God calls us to the Sacrament, to promise him that we will amend our Faults, and lead new Lives thenceforward; if we return Answer, that we *come not* because we are *Impenitent*, that is as much as to say, we *come not* as he bids because we *will* not, which is certainly the worst plea that ever was made for any offence, and can never render his Case better, but much worse that uses it.

As for those then, who keep away because they are *Impenitent*; they are left without all Plea, and have no excuse at all to make for their not coming to the Holy Sacrament. The only thing that can stand them in stead, either as to it or as to any thing else, is their Repentance and Amendment; which they will not delay, if they consider in how great need they stand of it. For, as I said,

4*ly*, *Impenitent men, who are unworthy of it, if they understand the danger and misery*

ſery of their ſtate, can by no means continue in it, but muſt forthwith Repent and Amend, and then this hindrance is gone, and they may worthily approach to it.

If they underſtand the danger and miſery of their ſtate, I ſay, *they cannot continue in it.* For ſo long as they remain Impenitent in *many*, or in any *one known* ſin, they are not only unfit to *receive the Sacrament*, as I have ſhewn, but alſo to *ſay their Prayers*, to *give Thanks*, to *make Vows*, or to have any thing to do with God in any other part of *Religious Worſhip* and Service. They are ſhut out from all benefits of Religion, they have no Salvation by *Chriſt*, nor any hopes of Heaven: if they happen to dye ſuddenly whilſt they are in this ſtate, or are call'd away before the work of Reformation is finiſhed, (as 'tis greatly to be feared they may, if they put it off for the *preſent*, and as in all likelihood they will if they delay it till their *Death-Bed*, at which time 'tis a very rare thing for any man to go through with it) they will go to *Hell*, there to be tormented with the inſupportable Anguiſh of a *wounded Conſcience*, and *unſatisfied Appetites*, and a *Raging Fire*, and all the *Terrors* and *Diſconſolation of Darkneſs*, and the utmoſt malice of *Devils* and *Damn'd Spirits*, and the high-

eſt

eſt *Shame* and *Confuſion of Face*; all which they muſt undergo without any *Eye to Pity*, or *Friend to Comfort* them, or any *one to refreſh* them, or any *Abatement*, or *Intermiſſion*, for *evermore*: And this is a ſtate of ſuch Horrour and Aſtoniſhment, as no man, that looks upon it, can abide in: it is a condition of ſuch extream danger, as no one in his Wits can willingly indure. So that if any of thoſe, who are *Impenitent*, will but be at the pains to lay to heart, and conſider of the ſadneſs of their ſtate; they can by no means perſiſt in it, but will run with haſte to Repent, and inſtantly ſet about the amendment of their ways, that ſo they may be delivered from it.

And as ſoon as ever they do ſo, this hindrance is gone, and they are *worthy* to come to the Holy Communion. For that which *fits* us for it, is not an *high Pitch* and *Perfection in ſaving Virtues*, or *Ecſtatick Degrees* and *Tranſports in Devotion*, as I have ſhewn; but ſuch *true Repentance* and change of Life, either in *Deed*, or at leaſt in *Will* and *Purpoſe*, as makes us *acceptable* and *honeſt Chriſtians*; ſo that whatever we were before, whilſt we continued impenitently wicked, we are meet Partakers of this Holy Feaſt, now we have Repented, and are fully reſolv'd

ſolv'd to become Obedient, and need not ſcrupulouſly draw back, but come to it gladly when we are call'd, and expect a Friendly welcome when we do.

And thus I have conſider'd this great, and moſt common plea, whereby ſo many are kept back from the Holy Sacrament, *viz. their thinking themſelves unworthy of it, and unfit to* receive it; and ſhewn plainly that no *ill* man *can be excuſed*, and that no *good* mnn *ought to be hindred* by it. And the Reſult of it is this. If any Perſon tells me he cannot come to this Feaſt, becauſe he is *unworthy to join in it*: I muſt tell him again, That he *muſt not only be afraid of unworthy coming to it, but alſo of unworthy abſtaining from it*; and that *unleſs he is impenitent, and ſtill unreſolv'd to leave all his Sins, he is worthy of it*; and that if *ſuch Impenitence is the cauſe of his not coming, it is no excuſe for it*; and that *he muſt conſider of the danger and miſery of that ſtate, and ſo Repent and get out of it*; and when once that is done he will be worthy, ſince *every Penitent is welcome* to it. If he is *truly Penitent*, he *is worthy*; and if he has not Repented yet, he muſt *inſtantly Repent* that he *may be worthy*; and then let him not hold off from this Heavenly Banquet, but chearfully approach to it when he is invited.

2*ly*, Others

2*ly*, Others, who cannot positively say they are unworthy of it, are yet kept back from the Holy Sacrament, because of *the great danger of unworthy Communicating*, *Damnation being said to be eaten in it*, *which seems to make abstaining from it the safer side*. *He that eats and drinks unworthily*, says St. *Paul*, *eats and drinks Damnation to himself*, 1 Cor. 11. 29.

Now in *Answer* to this, I shall observe, that by *Damnation* is meant,

1. A *Damning Sin*, *which is deadly to any man till he Repent of it*; and such are both *unworthy eating*, and *sinful abstaining*, *so that they are equal as to that Point*.

2. *Temporal Death and Punishments*, which were inflicted on the *Corinthians* for their *Intemperance at this Feast*, and *other Disorders which were peculiar to those times*, *and are not usual now in ours*; *so that the Fear of them need not discourage us from it*.

1*st*, I say, By *eating his own Damnation*, the Apostle means not *that he shall inevitably be damn'd for it*; but only that *he commits a Damning Sin*, *which will prove deadly to him unless he Repent of it*: and this is true, not only of *unworthy eating*, but also of *sinful abstaining*, *so that they are equal as to that Point*.

He means not, I say, *that he shall inevitably*

tably be Damn'd for it. And this is plain, becauſe for Chriſts ſake, God has promiſed *to forgive us all our ſins upon Repentance*, and therefore this of *unworthy receiving* among the reſt. Nay, as for this their *unworthy eating*, the *Apoſtle* tells the *Corinthians* in that very place, that *when they are Judg'd* or Condemned for it, it is not to conſign them to, but to deliver them from Eternal Torment. *When we are Judg'd*, ſays he, or Condemn'd for this Fault, *i. e.* to be *ſick* and *weak*, which God inflicted becauſe of it; *we are* not in Anger Puniſh'd, but in Mercy *Chaſtned of the Lord* by preſent Sufferings, *that we ſhould not* at the laſt day *be Condemn'd with the World* to Eternal. 1 *Cor.* 11.30, 31.

But only *that he commits a* † *Damning Sin, which will prove deadly to him, unleſs he Repent of it. He that eats this Bread, and drinks this Cup unworthily*, ſays he, *ſhall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord. i. e.* Unleſs his Repentance, that Goſpel Remedy for all ſin, prevents it, he ſhall be liable to be puniſh'd, not only for an abuſe in Meat and Drink, as if it were only Common Food; but for violating and prophaning the Body and Blood of Chriſt, which he ſhould have diſcern'd in it. 1 *Cor.* 11.27,29. And

† *So St.* Chryſoſt. *underſtands it.* Vid. Chryſ. *in* v. 32. 34.

And this is true, not only of *unworthy eating*, but also of *sinful abstaining* from it. For *that* our Lord has expressly forbidden, as I have shewn, and that too in such sort as shews he lays a great weight upon it; so that we most highly offend him in it, and cannot expect to regain his Favour till we Repent and Amend it; and therefore they are *both equal as to that Point*. We shall be Condemned, without Amendment, for unworthy eating, and so we shall too for sinful abstaining; and therefore if the Fear of Damnation be of Force with us, it must keep us off from both of them, and neither suffer us to *neglect* this Feast, nor to *prophane* it, but ingage us to come to it *worthily*, *i. e.* with Penitent Hearts, whensoever we are call'd thereto.

2*ly*, By *Damnation* the Apostle means *Temporal Death and Punishments, which God did then inflict on unworthy Communicants*. And this was not for all *unworthiness*, but particularly for their *Intemperance at this Feast, and other Disorders which were peculiar to those Times, and are not usual now in ours: so that the Fear of them need not discourage us from it.*

By *Damnation*, I say, he means *Temporal Death and Punishments, which God did then inflict on unworthy Communicants*. This he

he plainly intimates, when he ſets down *weakneſs*, and *ſickneſs*, and *death*, as the *Penalties*, whereto they were Condemn'd for their unworthy uſage. *He that eats and drinks unworthily*, ſays he, *eats and drinks Damnation to himſelf*, whereof you have many ſad Examples now in *Corinth*, for *for this* very *Cauſe* of unworthy eating, *many* now *are weak and ſickly among you, and many ſleep*, 1 Cor. 11. 29, 30.

And this God inflicted, *not for all unworthineſs*, but *particularly* for *ſome high* and *heinous Diſorders*, ſuch as their *open Schiſms*, and *groſs Intemperance* crept in by occaſion of their *Love-Feaſts*, which Prophanations were peculiar to *thoſe* times, and are not *now* uſual, or any where to be ſeen in *ours*.

They came to the Sacrament in *open Schiſms*, not eating all together when they met in the ſame houſe, but *Scandalouſly dividing* into *factious Clans*, and *ſeparate Tables: When ye come together in the Church*, and meet all *in one place*, ſays the Apoſtle, *I hear there be* † *Schiſms or Diviſions among you*, or that you bandy in Parties, and do not meet all as one Body, 1 *Cor.* 11. 18, 20.

† Σχίσματα.

They came to it alſo in a moſt *ſcanda-*

lous Excess and *gross Intemperance*, which *Vice*, though so confessedly loathsome in all other places, had yet, by occasion of their *Love-Feasts*, crept into this most solemn part of the Christian Worship and Service. St. *Jude* seems to charge the *Gnosticks*, those *Sensual* and *Luxurious* Persons, with some such Fault. *They are spots*, says he, *in your Feasts of Charity, when they Feast with you, feeding themselves without Fear*, *i. e.* so freely, as shews they have no Fear of God, or of the Solemnity and Religion of the Feast, *Jude* 12. And so doth St. *Peter* more plainly in his Description of the *same* men, 2 *Pet*. 2. *They count it pleasure to riot in the day time*, says he, *Spots they are and Blemishes, sporting themselves*, or *being* † *Luxurious with their own* * *Deceivings*, as we read it; but in some *Manuscripts* of greatest Authority, particularly the *Alexandrian*, with which agrees the Translation of the * *Vulgar Latin*, it is *being Luxurious in their* † *Feasts of Charity when they Feast with you*, v. 13. And with a like excess *Socrates* charges the *Egyptians* a good

† Ἐντρυφῶντες.

* Ἐν ταῖς ἀπάταις.

* *It reads* Deliciis affluentes, *not* Fraudibus.

† Ἐν ταῖς ἀγάπαις.

¶ while

while afterwards. For † *they*, says he, *Communicate at Even after they are full fed, and have glutted themselves at their Love-Feast with all the Varieties of a choice Banquet.* And because the *Love-Feasts* minister'd occasion for such excess, and made way for several abuses; they came in time to be wholly laid aside in *Communions*: and to prevent that *Intemperance* which *they* had introduced, it was order'd *generally* that men should receive *Fasting*, contrary to what our Lord did at *first*, which was ratified by a * *Decree* in the *Third Council of Carthage* held near 400 years after the *Birth* of our Saviour Christ.

† Μετὰ γὰρ τὸ ἐνωχηθῆναι, καὶ παντοίων ἐδεσμάτων ἐμφορεθῆναι, περὶ ἑσπέραν προσφέροντες, τῶν μυστηρίων μεταλαμβάνουσιν. *Soc. Hist. Eccles. l.* 5. *c.* 22. *p. Ed. Val.* 287.

Now this *Intemperance*, which had crept into the *Love-Feasts*, and so mixt with the Holy Sacrament which always went along with them, was another most shameful offence, which St. *Paul* reproved in the *Corinthian Communions*. They did not only change this

* Ut Sacramenta Altaris nonnisi à jejunis hominibus celebrentur, excepto uno Die anniversario, quo cœna Domini celebratur. *Concil. Carth.* 3. *Can.* 29. *apud Bin. Vol. prim. Concil. p.* 711.

Ordinance of Union into a *Factious meeting*, by falling into ſeparate Gangs and Parties when they came to it: but alſo turned this *Pure* and *Holy Treat* into a *drunken Club*, and a *Riotous entertainment*. *In* your *eating*, ſays he, *every one* as he comes ſooner, *takes before other his own Supper, and one*, being poor, *is hungry*, through the ſmallneſs of his Proviſions, *and another*, being Rich, *is Drunken* through the exceſs of his, 1 Cor. 11. 21. And upon this *Schiſmatical* and *intemperate eating*, he lays the danger of that *Judgment* or *Condemnation*, which God was wont in thoſe days to inflict on them. *If any man* pretend *hunger*, ſays he, for this Greedineſs and Intemperance, *let him eat at home, that* ſo *ye come not together* at the Lords Supper, as now ye do, *to Condemnation*. v. 34.

Now theſe *ſcandalous Irregularities*, but eſpecially this *Intemperance* at the Lords Table, for which God was ſo ſevere upon the *Corinthians*, is no Crime in the Communicants of *our* Days, when among all the Unworthy Receivers, none are ſo by reaſon of *exceſs*; but was peculiar to *theirs*, when with the Sacrament they always joyn'd their *Love-Feaſts*, that were lyable to be abuſed to *Gluttony* and *Drunkenneſs*. And as the *Fault*, ſo alſo the

Puniſhment

Punishment took place only among them, but is not usual now with us, who do not see our unworthy Communicants smitten by the hand of God, and struck down by *Miracle* into *Death* or *Diseases*. And therefore the apprehension of this Judgment need not at all discourage us from the Holy Sacrament; since, from our observation of the World, we have no reason to expect, that, if indeed we come unworthily, we shall fall under it.

As for this *Damnation* then, which the *Apostle* charges on *unworthy eating*, it either signifies a *Damning Sin*, and that is true of *willful abstaining* as well as of *unworthy receiving*; or a *Temporal Punishment* miraculously inflicted for their *Drunkenness* and *Intemperance*, wherewith at that time they polluted and prophaned it, which was a thing peculiar to those days, and is not now derived down to ours, so that we have no just cause to be deterred by it.

Thus it is, if really we should come *unworthily* to the Sacrament, we only commit a *Damning sin*, as we should do by *willful abstaining*, which will be forgiven us afterwards upon the same Terms whereon God forgives us all other sins, *i. e.* our *Repenting* of it, and amend-

ing it. But if we are truly *Penitent*, and have broke off all our evil ways, intending fully to lead new Lives thenceforwards; then we may assure our selves that we are *worthy* and welcome Guests, and are not concerned in this Damnation threatned to *unworthy* Communicants at all.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of three other Hindrances from Receiving.

The Contents.

A Third *Hindrance is, becauſe therein they are to promiſe concerning every ſin, that they will no more commit it; which Promiſe ſome dare not make, becauſe they fear they ſhall not keep it. If this be ſufficient to hinder any man from the Communion, it ought alſo to hinder him from Prayers, and being Baptized a Chriſtian. But it muſt not hinder men from any of them.* 1. *Let them Promiſe this Amendment, and keep it, and then the Doubt is anſwered. They ought to make it. And by Gods Grace they may perform it, if they have a mind to it.* 2. *If after ſome time they happen to break it in any Inſtance, they have the Benefit of Repentance afterwards.* A Fourth *Hindrance is the great difficulty ſuppoſed to be in it, and want of time and leiſure to prepare for it. This lies not more*

against the Communion, than against an Holy Life and all Religion. But it must not put us by from any of them. For, 1. *If it required all that time and pains which is supposed, that would be no excuse for any of us to neglect it. To true Penitents, the time and pains is not so great as is imagined. It requires more of ill men, but less of Good, who may prepare for it in a less time, yea, if used to Self-examinations, upon a few minutes warning.* 3. *The poorest and most imployed have time sufficient if they would use it to that end: and where they have fewer helps, and less time, the less preparation is accepted of them.* A Fifth *Hindrance is, because they see others, or have found themselves to be no better by it; so that 'tis not worth their while to fit themselves for it. If this have any Force, it is not to be restrained to the Sacrament, but holds stronger against Prayers, and other parts of Worship. But it ought not to hinder any Persons. For,* 1. *Where it is true there is no excuse from it.* 2. *In all good mens case 'tis false, for they are really better by it; many by improving in their goodness, all by continuing in it, for which it is richly worth their pains to come to it.* 3. *Where they are not bettered at all, or not so much as might be expected; that*

is

is purely through their own Fault, in not using the means of improving by it: so let them amend that, and this Hindrance is removed.

A *Third* thing that keeps back several from the Sacrament, though both in Duty to their Saviour, and in tenderness to their own Souls, they are most straitly bound to frequent it, is because *therein they are to promise concerning every sin they find themselves guilty of, that they will no more commit it; and this Promise they dare not make, because they fear they shall not keep it.*

Now as for these Persons, I would desire them to consider, that if this be a sufficient hindrance to keep them from this Ordinance, it is equally so to keep them from their *Prayers*, nay, from their very *Baptism*, and being inroll'd *Christians.* For God will not hear their *Prayers* for the *Pardon of any Sin* till they *Repent* of it, and resolve within themselves and make him Faithful promises that they will never more commit it. Nor did he admit them to *Baptism*, to be listed *Members of his Church*, till they had *Renounced the Devil and all his works*, with *all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh*, and *promised to keep his Holy Will and Commande-*

ments, and walk in the same all the days of of their Lives. If we stick at these Promises then, we must scruple saying our Prayers, and boggle at all Religion, and, if we were yet *unbaptized*, upon this account refuse our Baptism, since therein we *did*, and *ought* to make as large and express promises of leaving all our sins, as we *can*, or are *required* to make in the *Holy Communion*.

But to those, who are afraid of the Holy Sacrament upon this account, I have these *two* things to add.

1. *Promise this Amendment, and keep it, and then the Doubt is answer'd.*

2. Though *after some time they should forget themselves, and break it in some instance, yet still have they the benefit of Repentance afterwards.*

1*st*, I would advise them to *promise this amendment, and keep it, and then the Doubt is answered.* When the Objection against *promising*, is only the danger of *performing*, when they both *can* and *ought* to perform: it is an objection that lies only against *themselves*, in a suspicion that they will be wanting to their own bounden Duty and Service; and that is better removed by their care faithfully to discharge it, than by any thing that I can say to it. They *ought to perform it*, and

and *if they will they may do it*; and therefore let them be careful to do that, and this difficulty is ended.

They ought, I say, *to perform this Amendment which they promise to Almighty God*, and leave every sin which formerly they have committed. God will not forgive us any *Fault*, whilst we persist *Impenitent*, and continue to repeat it; but requires first, on *our* part, that we *forsake* and amend it. *Sin no more*, says our Saviour to the *Woman taken in Adultery*, and then *will not I condemn thee*, Joh. 8. 4. 11. And *let the Wicked* man *forsake his ways*, says God by *Isaiah*, *and return unto the Lord*, *and* then *he will have mercy upon him*, *and abundantly pardon*. Is. 5. 7. It is no indifferent matter that is left to our own choice, whether we will leave our sins, or no; but the thing must of necessity be done, if ever we hope to appease God, or go to Heaven: so that we must not be less forward to promise, for that is our Duty, but more careful to perform.

And as they *ought* to perform this amendment, which they promise to Almighty God; so by *his Grace* they *may* perform it, if they *will* and have a mind to it. When at this Feast they say they *will* never commit *this*, or *that* sin any more, as God has required; they say not that they

they will never be *surprized* into it, but that they will never act it *willfully*, *i. e.* when they see and are aware of it; or, if at any time they do, that they will not *persist* in it, but *amend* it, *Repentance* always going along from the *beginning* to the *end* of the *Gospel Covenant*. And this by *Gods help* they all may do, if they make it their serious business, and lay out their utmost care and pains upon it. For when a mans *Conscience* tells him that the thing is sinful which he is about to act, or at least he could readily see it, if he would direct his Eye to it: he need not go on unless he will, but, if he please, may instantly turn away from it. This, I say, he may do; for if he will not be wanting to himself, God will not be wanting to him in it, but inable him effectually to abstain from it when he duly indeavours it. If once we are careful to *work out our own Salvation*; St. *Paul* assures us that *he will work in us both to will, and to do*, Phil. 2. 12, 13. *To him that hath*, *i. e.* imploys what he hath, our Saviour promises that *more shall still be given*, Mat. 25. 29: and elsewhere again, *God will give the Holy Spirit to those that ask him*. Luc. 11. 13.

And since they *may* perform this Amendment if they will, and *ought* to perform it if ever they hope to be accepted; let them but

but be careful so to do, and then this hindrance will give them no more trouble, but be quite removed. They will have no cause to be slow to promise, what they will be thus honestly careful to perform.

2. Though *afterwards they should forget themselves, and break this promise in some instance; yet is not their case desperate thereupon, but they have still the benefit of Repentance afterwards.*

Indeed, if they break it as soon as ever they have made it, and run *constant changes* in *sinning* and *repenting*, performing this time, and transgressing it the next: that Repentance will be of no avail with God, because it rests only in *fair Words* and *Promises*, or at best in some *faint attempts*, without any *real Reformation* and *Amendment*. Nay, if they fall a Second time into some sins, which *lay waste the Conscience*, such as *Murder*, *Adultery*, *willful Perjury*, and the like, which *few* good men can ever incur at *first*, and *fewer* can afterwards *Repeat*, when once they have smarted for it: it may still give cause why the sufficiency of their Repentance should be questioned. But if in sins which are more *ordinarily incurred*, as *Discontent*, *Pride*, *Revenge*, *Backbiting*, *Passion*, &c. which are generally meant by those who are kept back by this Impediment;

diment: If after they have promiſed to leave *theſe* ſins, I ſay, they go on for ſome due time to make good their word, and avoid the fault in ſeveral opportunities that lead them to it, but at laſt happen to forget themſelves, and break it in ſome Inſtance: yet doth not that *null* their former Repentance, or make their Caſe deſperate thereupon; but they have ſtill the *benefit of Repentance afterwards*, and by amending what they have done amiſs, may be perfectly reſtored and made whole again. For God will *pardon* us upon our *Repentance*, not only *Once*, or a *Second* time, but as *often* as there is occaſion. So that if after we have promiſed in the Sacrament, that we will never more be guilty of any particular ſin, we yield to it at length, and are a-new overcome: let us but Repent of that Breach, and fully reſolve againſt it a ſecond time, and then we are made whole as we were in our former ſtation.

As for this Hindrance then, whereby ſome are kept back from the Sacrament, *viz.* Their *promiſing therein concerning every Fault that they will no more commit it, which promiſe they dare not make, becauſe they are afraid they ſhall not keep it*: it need not ſtick with them, nor ought to hinder any man that pretends to Religion.

ligion. For let them *promise this Amendment*, and *keep it*, and then the *Doubt is answered.* Or, if after they have kept it for some time, they happen to *fail upon some occasion*; let them *Repent of that Breach*, and make *new Promises and Resolutions*, and then they are *whole again.* And all this has nothing in it that *can be avoided*, or *ought to be feared*, but is all *necessary* and *desirable* to be done: for it is their *Duty thus to promise*, and *their Duty to perform*, and their *great Priviledge*, that, if they fail in any instance afterwards, upon repeating their *Repentance* they shall receive a *Pardon.* It is what every man must do, not only to be a *worthy Communicant*, but to be a *Christian.* For the same things are promised in *Prayer*, and in *Holy Baptism*: so that if any man draw back from *them*, and sticks to *promise them*; he must not *pray* to God, nor pretend to *Religion*, nor, were he to chuse again, be *baptized* into the Christian Profession.

4. A *Fourth* thing which keeps back several from the Sacrament, Is *the great difficulty they apprehend to be in a worthy Receiving of it, and their want of time and leisure to prepare for it.* They fancy it is a very *hard* thing for any man worthily to Communicate; and since 'tis *hard*,

it

in must needs require much *time* and *application* to prepare themselves for it: and as for their parts, they have little *leisure* from their *business*, and are not made to *master Difficulties*; so that they must be content, and hope they shall be excused, if they abstain from it.

This *objection* many are ready to make against coming to the Communion. But every Christian will be much ashamed of it, and slow to urge it a *second* time, when once he considers, that it lies not more against *it*, than against an *Holy Life*, and *all Religion*. For all the particulars of worthy Communicating, as I have shewn, are equally parts of indispensable Duty, and a good man. God has required no more *Virtues* in us at the *time of Receiving*, than he requires at *all other times* to render us *acceptable Christians*, to fit us to say our *Prayers*, or to give us any *hopes* of *Eternal Happiness*. So that if any man says the work of the Sacrament is *over-hard*, and therefore he is *not willing*, or *wants time* to fit himself for Receiving: he may as well say he is not *willing*, or *wants time* to be a *Christian*, or to go to *Heaven*, and upon that Plea may with equal Reason bid adieu to *all Religion*.

But to answer this more particularly, I must observe to them, 1. That

1. That *if it did really require all this time and pains to prepare for it, yet would that be no ſufficient Reaſon or Excuſe for any of us to Neglect it.*

2. That *to all true Penitents it is not ſo difficult, nor requires ſo much time as is imagined; ſo that they have not ſo much as this Diſcouragemet to make them backward in it.*

3. That *all, even the pooreſt and moſt employed, have time ſufficient, if they will uſe it to that end; and that of thoſe, who have leſs leiſure and abilities, ſo as that they cannot fit themſelves in great Degrees, God expects the leſs preparation, and accepts it at their hands.*

1. I ſay, *If it did really require all this time and pains to prepare for it which is ſuppoſed, yet would that be no ſufficient Reaſon or Excuſe for any of us to neglect it.* For when God bids us do a thing, can any man think it a good excuſe to ſay, *I would if it were not troubleſome, or long a doing?* Muſt we perform thoſe things only at his Command, which are eaſie, and ſoon over; but neglect all others, which imploy more care and pains, and require to be attended longer? How we may like ſuch *Maſters*, I will not ſay, but I am ſure God will entertain no ſuch *Servants* as will pick and chuſe with his Commands, and obey them no further than their

their *own eaſe* and *occaſions* will ſuffer them. No, he expects we ſhould do him Service, though it be with difficulty and loſs to our own ſelves. And this in all Reaſon *he* may very well require of *us*, becauſe *we* our ſelves, who can plead no ſuch *Deſerts*, nor make any ſuch *Recompences* as he propoſes, do all look for it from *our Servants*, in any buſineſs they are to do for *us*. For if we ſet them to any work, we ſhall think it a very odd Anſwer, if they tell us they would do it for us, but that they are unwilling to be at *ſo much pains*, or to ſpare *ſo much time* as it requires.

Although a worthy Communicating then would require much time and pains to prepare for it, yet would not that be a juſt excuſe for any Perſon to Neglect it. For ſince God *Commands it*, nay, *Commands it urgently*, and lays a great weight upon it; we are bound in all Duty to perform it, though it coſt us both *time* and *pains* ſo to do.

But,

2. *To all true Penitents it is not ſo difficult, nor requires ſo much time as is imagined; ſo that they have not ſo much as this Diſcouragement to make them backward in it.*

The *Difficulty* of *worthy Receiving* lies not in *giving Chriſt Thanks*, or *believing* the

the Scripture and all its Promiſes, as I have ſhewn; but only in *Repenting of all our Sins.* And this, indeed, has *more difficulty in it, and requires more time to ill men, who are held Captives by them; but not very much to good, who are already ſet free, and have broke off from them.*

1. I ſay, *Repentance of all their Sins, and amendment of their Lives, has more difficulty in it, and requires more time to ill men.* For they have many Luſts to pare off which are very dear to them, and many things to ſet ſtraight, which cannot all be done upon the ſudden. When they come to enter upon a good Life, who as yet are ſtrangers to it; they muſt *conſider particularly* of *all Gods Laws* which are the *Rule* of it, and *examine* their own Hearts at *every one*, to ſee againſt which of them they have *offended*, and there make their *particular purpoſes*, and *full reſolutions of Amendment.* They muſt ſpend *time* and *pains* upon this *examination*, to bring them to a *Penitent purpoſe*, and a *deliberate well-weighed Reſolution*: and when that is done, it will coſt them more time and pains ſtill in *frequent Tryals*, as in the courſe of Life and Buſineſs they meet with opportunities to *practiſe* and *perform* what they have reſolv'd upon. For, when upon a ſtrict Review of their whole Lives they

they find they have several sins to amend, they must not think, after they have resolved against them, to get perfectly quit of them on the *sudden*. But they must withstand the Temptations to them *once* and *again*, and pass through frequent Tryals, and exercise themselves in many Conflicts, before they will have got the Conquest, and be indeed reformed from them.

Thus will it require both much time and pains for an *ill man* to become good, and not only to *Resolve* that he will amend all his ways, but to put in *practice* and *perform* it too.

'Tis true, indeed, I cannot say the *actual amendment* of every Fault, and the *performance* as well as *purpose* of obeying in every Commandment, is necessary to a *worthy Communicant*. For a *full Resolution* of amendment, without staying for time and opportunities to fulfill it, is sufficient to fit us for this Feast; as I have observ'd it did in the *Apostles Days*, when, upon their first Conversion and becoming Penitent, before they had time to perform what they had promised, men were admitted to the Sacrament, as to other parts of Worship. So that the Repentance required of us to a worthy Communion, will not take up all that time, which

which is necessary to amend a whole Life, and to practise all the Duties of a Good man.

But although it will not call for all that time which is necessary to a *New Life* and *Practice*; yet will it require all that, which is necessary to beget and actuate a *New Heart* and *Purpose*: and that will be much more in *ill*, than it will be in *good* men. For when ill men examine themselves, to find out all their Sins, that they may resolve against them: they have many *more sins* to Repent of, and imploy their minds upon; and are more *Strangers* to their *own Hearts* and *Lives*, having never observed or looked into them, and so need the greater *Labour of Recollection*; and more *hardness of Heart* and *coldness of Spirit*, so that they do not so easily *renounce* them, nor can so *readily* and *fully Resolve* against them, when they have discovered them, as good men can.

As for this Repentance of all their sins then, which consists not in an *actual amendment* of them, but in *full Purposes* and *Resolutions* never more to commit them, which is sufficient to a worthy Communion: it has more *difficulty* in it, and requires more *time* than *ordinary* to *ill men who are held Captives by them.*

But,

But,

2. *It doth not require very much to good, who are set free, and have broke off from them.*

The great thing which they have to do, is to *examine what are their Faults*, and to find out their own miscarriages: for if once they *discover* them, they are so *habitually* set to amend every thing that is amiss, that they will quickly *resolve* against them. And this discovery they will make much *easier*, and *sooner*, than ill men can. For their Faults being fewer, are sooner run over; and their Consciences being tender, and used to observe them, they do better remember them, and are the readier, when they are asked, to give in an Information of them, than the others are. Indeed, if they do not accustome themselves to *Self-examinations*, they will find the more to do, and need a longer time, when they come to them: But if they are much vers'd in them, especially if they take an account of the *Day past every Evening*; having daily discovered and acknowledged all their Faults, they will bear them still in mind, and have an habitual sense of them; and so be able at any time, to tell what acts they are to promise and resolve upon, at a few minutes warning; as we may

may well ſuppoſe they did in the firſt times, when they Communicated *every day*, and, under the *preſſing wants* and *diſtractions* they conflicted with, could not ſet apart *whole hours* for *preparation*.

Thus is the work of *Preparation for the Communion*, not ſo *difficult to true Penitents*, nor requiring ſo much time as ſome have imagined. It may coſt them ſome time whilſt they imploy their Thoughts in actuating their *Love*, and *Thankfulneſs*, and *other Graces*, before they come; but if they have little leiſure for it, this need not be long a doing; for moſt *good* minds are ſo *inclined* and *habituated* to theſe Tempers, that they can expreſs them, and that too, anſwerable to the Degree of Warmth their Complexion allows in other things, with *Fervor* and *Intenſion*, upon any warning. But the great Work, which may ſeem to have *length* and *trouble* in it, is *Repentance of all their Sins*; and this will not be either *long*, or *troubleſome* to *them*. For the only thing that will give them trouble in it, is the Work of *Self-Examination*, to find out what their ſins have been; their Hearts being ſo good, that they can quickly reſolve againſt them, when once they have diſcovered them: and this they will not find tedious, but may diſpatch in convenient time. If

they

they were yet to begin the work of Reformation, indeed, they must spend more *hours*, or *days* upon it, and be held to it so long, till they could run over *all Gods Laws*, and *all their own actions*, and work themselves up into *firm purposes* of amendment at every thing they find was done amiss through their whole Lives, which would be a more *tedious* and *painful* business: So that when *ill men* come to prepare themselves for the Sacrament, they must set out more time for it, and expect to pass through greater hardship. But then they must remember not to charge this upon the *Communion*, but upon a *New Life* and *Regeneration*; it not being for the work of worthy Receiving, but of Repentance and Reformation, which they must go through with whether they receive or no, that all this time is spent, and hard pains taken. But if they have begun to Repent long ago, and have indeavoured carefully to become *good* men; a much less time will serve their turn: for they will be able presently to *resolve* against any Fault they see, being *habitually* set against all already; and also *see* all they have to repent of, upon a small Examination. If they have not been used to *frequent Examinations*, so as to have all their sins at hand before them; it may hold

hold them a longer time: but if they have examined *often*, especially if they have reviewed and acknowledged *every Night* their *every Days* Transgressions, they will be able to do it at a *few minutes* warning. So that if they should happen at any time to be *surprized* with a Communion, which it is not *decent* for any good Christian to flinch from, though all would desire a more solemn preparation where they have time for it, yet can they fit themselves for it in that strait, and know what sins to resolve against upon a few moments Recollection.

But besides that *it would be no sufficient excuse to any Person to neglect the Holy Sacrament, though it required all that time and pains which is supposed*; and that *to all true Penitents it is not so tedious, or difficult as some have imagined, so that they have not so much as this discouragement to make them backward in it*: I proceed now,

3. To shew that *all, even the poorest and most employed, have time sufficient, if they will use it to that end; and that of those who have less leisure and opportunities, so as that they cannot fit themselves in great Degrees, God expects the less preparation, and accepts it at their Hands.*

imployed, have time ſufficient to prepare for the Communion, if they would uſe it to that end.

That which makes them apprehend they have no time for it, is a perſwaſion, that *all preparation muſt be carried on in the Cloſet*, when they are ſequeſtred from all *worldly Affairs*, and have ſet themſelves apart for *Devotion* and *Religious Meditations*. And for doing this, they who are *full of buſineſs*, who muſt *labour* all the day long, till they have quite tired themſelves, for *maintenance*, or whoſe time is not at their *own diſpoſal*, but at the *will of others*, complain they have no leiſure, or vacant time to ſpare.

But now, beſides that no perſons muſt pretend they can find no time for *ſet Devotions*, and *ſeparate Thoughts*, ſince the moſt imployed of all can find it ſometimes to throw away on *Vanity* and *Diverſions*: this conceit, *that all preparation ought to be carried on in the Cloſet*, is a miſtake; for, when any Perſons are ſo minded, it may go on whilſt they are *held at work*, and *ingaged* in the *courſe of their imployment*. For the great buſineſs of preparation, as has been ſhewn, lies in *examining our own hearts*, to find out what our ſins have been, and in *reſolving* particularly againſt them. And this a man may carry on in any place,

where he has Liberty for thought and Recollection. He may call to mind his own ways as he is on a Journey, or busie at his work; for thought is free at all times, and every man may consider and reflect whensoever he has a mind to it. And so long as he can find time for this, he has time enough to prepare himself, let his *Condition* be as *Dependant*, or his *time* as much *taken up*, as it will.

And as for *for those, who have less leisure and opportunities, so as that they cannot fit themselves in great Degrees, God expects the less preparation*, I say, *and accepts it at their hands.*

Thus much he expects of every man, and that all *may* and *must* perform, *viz.* That *they examine themselves about all those things which they know are sinful, and, wheresoever they find themselves Guilty, resolve stedfastly to do so no more, and humbly ask his Pardon*; and that they *have an affectionate thankful sense of Christs Death, and of all that he has done for them.* But as for the *Degrees* of these Duties, how *high* they shall be in their *Detestation of every Sin*, how *ardent* in their Acts of *Resignation*, how *Passionate* in their *Love* and *Thankful Affection*; though he is well pleased with it where he finds it, yet he exacts not the *utmost height*, as I have

† *Part* 1. *Chap.* 3. † observed, in those who are fitter for it; nor looks for more in any, than that every man return according to the opportunities which he has given him. Some have *Naturally* much *flame*, and *great vehemence* in all their *Passions*, and much *time* in their own hands, and much *help* from *good* and *inlivening books*, or great *quickness of Wit and parts*, which can readily and advantageously represent to their own minds the *motives* to these Dispositions; and these Persons are able to imprint an *higher measure* of them, and affect their own Hearts more *deeply* with them, than others of *cooler tempers*, and *less leisure*, and *fewer helps*, and *slower understandings*, can ever hope to do. But when men have *less time* and *abilities* for them, God expects the *less perfection* and *Degrees of* them. For in these Cases, his Rule is this: *Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.* Luc. 12. 48.

And thus I have considered this *Fourth Hindrance*, and shewn that the difficulty *of the thing*, or the *want of time*, can be no *just Reason* or *Excuse* to keep any man from *Receiving*. And the *sum* of what I have suggested in this business, is this: *If it required* [illegible]

ſed, that is *no ſufficient ground for any perſon to neglect it*; becauſe when God *commands* us to do a thing, as he has done moſt ſtrictly in this Caſe, we muſt be willing to ſpend both *time* and *pains* upon it. But in reality, it is neither *ſo painful* nor *tedious to good men*, as is *ordinarily imagined*. It coſts more, indeed, to *ill men*, becauſe they have *more faults to examine* after, and *more backwardneſs to reſolve* againſt them; but this expence of time and pains they muſt not impute to the *Communion*, but to an *Holy Life* and *Regeneration*, which, whether they Communicate or no, if they Love their own Souls they muſt labour and manfully indeavour in. But as for *Good men*, their great work is *Self-examination*, it being an eaſie thing for them to reſolve againſt any ſins when they ſee them; and this will not be long or tedious to them: nay, if they have been uſed to examine *often*, and to call themſelves to an account *every evening*, if neceſſity ſo requires, it may be diſpatch'd at a *few minutes* warning. It is a thing which *all men*, even the *poor* and *moſt imployed*, *may find time for*, yea, when there is need of it, without *hindring* or *neglecting any other affair*, *if they are careful to uſe it to that end*; and when they have *leſs leiſure* and *abilities*, ſo as that

they cannot *fit themſelves* in *great Degrees*, there God expects the *leſs preparation*, and *accepts it* at their hands. To Communicate, is a moſt *neceſſary Duty*, which *will not be excuſed*; and a moſt *equitable* and *eaſie* one, which *need not be declined*; ſo that no pretence of *hardſhip*, or of *want of time* ought ever to be urged, or can ever be allowed to put us by it.

5. A *Fifth* thing, which hinders ſeveral from the Sacrament, and makes them careleſly to neglect it, is becauſe *they ſee others, or have found themſelves to be no whit bettered or improved by it; ſo that 'tis not worth their while to fit themſelves for it.*

This is a plea, which ſome, who are pretty conſtant in *other Ordinances*, are wont to make for their great neglect of *this*. But if there be any weight in it, they are much to blame in reſtraining it to the *Sacrament*, ſince it would hold much ſtronger for their *not coming to Prayers*, or the *publick Aſſemblies*, or *other parts of Worſhip*. For theſe ſame perſons that make this Complaint, of being little better'd or improved by *it*, could ſay the ſame of *them* too if they had a mind to it. For they are much more frequent in *reading the Scriptures*, in *ſaying their Prayers*, in *hearing Sermons*, and in joyning

ing in all *other* parts of Worſhip at the *Publick Aſſemblies*, than they are at this Ordinance: ſo that if they are no ways better'd under the *means of Grace*, that *unfruitfulneſs* ought leaſt of all to be charged upon the *Sacrament*, for alas! it is but very ſeldome they are ſeen at it, but much more upon *praying to God*, and *hearing the Word*, and *other parts of Worſhip*. And therefore if unfruitfulneſs under any Ordinance be a Reaſon, not of uſing *greater care* in it that they may get profit by it, but of a *negligent abſtaining* from it; they are to blame in confining it to the *Communion*, ſince it would ſerve much more to excuſe them from *Prayers*, and *Sermons*, and all *other* parts of *Worſhip* and *Devotion*.

But that none may be hindred by it from coming to this Feaſt, I ſhall obſerve,

1. That *where it is true, there is no excuſe from it.*

2. That *in all good mens caſe 'tis falſe, for they are really better by it.*

3. That *where they are not better'd at all, or not ſo much as might be expected, that is purely through their own Fault, and they muſt mend it.*

1. *Where 'tis true that they are no better by the Sacrament, that is no excuſe for their*

neglect of it. And this is plain, because we are not bound to Communicate only in *Interest*, so as when that ceases we might be free from it; but in *Duty* too, our Lord having most expressly required and injoin'd it. Had we nothing but our *own benefit* to ingage us to it, then indeed it would be a good Reason not to trouble our selves with it, when we found we were no better by it. But God has made it our *Duty* to come, as we have seen, by an *express* and *indispensable Commandment*: And when there is Gods *Law* and *Precept* in the Case, it is an ill excuse for any man who neglects it, to say he did so, because he could not hope to be a *gainer* by it. If we refuse to do what he bids us, when it brings in no Advantage to our selves, we cast off his Service, and begin to be acted by other Principles; we do as good as tell him that we will do all things out of *Interest*, and with an eye to our *own profit*, but nothing for *his Pleasure*, and in obedience to his Commandment; which is as much as to say, we will only *serve our selves*, but not *serve him* at all.

2. *In all Good mens case 'tis false, for they are really made better by it.*

They are not better perhaps in what they *expect*, because their expectations are

are not right, but they look for ſuch benefits from the Sacrament, as God never intended by it; nay, ſuch, it may be, as in this world he never means to convey to them, either by *it*, or by any *other* Inſtrument. And thus it is when men hope, after they have Communicated, to be *fill'd with ſenſible joys and tranſports*, to be *abſolutely aſſured of Gods ſpecial Love and Kindneſs*, to be *freed thenceforward from all further Fears and Doubtings*, to have a *removal of ſome troubleſome temptations*, to *get quit of all Thoughts and Deſires, and the very firſt motions to ill things*, of all *dulneſs* and *diſtraction in their Devotions*, of all *ſinful ſurpriſes and involuntary eſcapes*, and ſuch like. Theſe are benefits, which although God out of his *abundant Grace* and *Indulgence may ſometimes allow to us*, yet he has no where *promiſed us*, nor ſees always *fit for us*; nay, ſome of them in this Eſtate do *not agree to us*, being Exemptions from ſuch *infirmities* as are *inſeparable from our Natures*: and therefore, when we come to the Sacrament, they are not to be expected in it. They are not of the number of thoſe bleſſings which are inſeparably made over to it, or of thoſe effects which are always wrought by it; ſo that we have no Reaſon to complain of its being a bar-

ren, and unfruitful Ordinance, becauſe they are with-held from us.

But although they are not benefited in *theſe* Reſpects, yet are they in *others*, which make it richly worth their while to fit themſelves for this Feaſt, and are an abundant Recompence for all the pains they take in it. For, beſides the *quieting of their Conſciences*, though not with an *abſolute Aſſurance*, (a pitch of hope that is very *rarely* found in any, even of the *beſt* Perſons) yet with a *very comfortable ſenſe of Gods Love* and *Friendſhip*; which is an effect it will have in thoſe good minds, who conſider that therein they confirm'd the New Covenant with God, wherein he promiſed them pardon if they would Repent, and they profeſs'd to do it: Beſides this effect, I ſay, of *quieting their Conſciences*, it benefits them further in their *Graces* and *Virtuous indowments*. For, though ſome of them fear they are not, yet in reality *all Good men are bettered by the Sacrament, ſome by improving, and all by continuing in their Goodneſs, which they are to aſcribe to it.*

1. *Some Good men*, I ſay, (and thoſe, I hope, the greateſt Part) *are better'd in the Sacrament, by an Improvement of thoſe Graces which they bring along to it*: They *thank Chriſt more freely*, and *Love him more affect-*

affectionately, and are *reſign'd to him more intirely*, and *watch againſt* thoſe *Temptations* which were wont to win moſt upon them *more carefully* after every receiving, than they did before. It *ſpurs* them on, where their pace was *ſlackned*; and makes them *more mindful* of any Duty, when they had *forgot* it; and *brings them back* to it, when they had *ſtrayed* from it; and makes them *Circumſpect* to diſcharge it, when they had been more *remiſs* and *careleſs* of it: it helps *Husbands*, to be more *tender* and *affectionate*; *Wives*, to be more *dutiful* and *obſervant*; *Children*, to be more *reſpectful*, *towardly*, and *obedient*; *Servants*, to be more *Faithful*, and *Diligent*; and *all men* to be more concerned to *Honour God*, to be more *Humble* and *Temperate*, *True* and *Faithful*, *Juſt* and *Charitable*, *Meek* and *Peaceable*, than they were before they partook of it. All theſe Virtues, Tempers and Diſpoſitions, as there is *need* of them, and they can *attend* and *apply their minds* to them, are quickned and ſet on by it. And though this Holy Flame, which was kindled in their minds at the Altar, will burn dim, and grow cool again; and this Religious bent of Heart will ſlacken and be more remiſs in time: yet being afreſh inlivened and intended by a new approach

to

to this Feast, the former *Ardors* will be revived, and the same bent establish'd, and so they will be always advancing forward in a continual improvement.

This increase of their Graces, and Augmentation of all virtuous Dispositions, especially of those wherein they are most defective, the Sacrament works in *many* good persons, and 'tis very fit it should do it in *all*. And although I dare not say they are *unworthy* of it, or *unbetter'd* and *unfruitful* under it; yet I will say they are very much *wanting to their own Souls*, who are not careful to carry on, and attain this improvement by it. And if they examine their Growth in Grace and Goodness, by a growth in these points; I believe the greatest part of careful and devout Receivers, will find they are really made more perfect, and improved in Virtue by frequenting it.

Yea, I add further, they may be thus improved by it, though upon *Examination* they themselves should not be able to point out Determinately in *what*, or make a *clear Discovery* of it. For very few Persons do so strictly *observe the Degrees* of their own Attainments in any Virtues, with what *ease* they do them, and how *seldome* they sin against them; as may inable them to *compare* exactly the pitch of their

their *present* Graces, with the pitch of the *same* Graces sometime *afterwards*. And if they should very narrowly observe them, yet would they not be able nicely to judge of every *small increase*; for *little* things are no more discernable in *Grace*, than they are in *Nature*, nor can be easier seen in *growing Virtues*, than in a *growing man*, or *Tree*, or other *Natural* improvements. And besides, since the Grace which the Sacrament is to improve in us, is so *diffused*, and extends to so *many* instances; when really we have gain'd and advanced *in* it, yet may it be hard for us to recollect, and shew determinately in *what*, and specifie it in the *Particulars*.

It is so I am sure in *knowledge*, which is another thing wherein the instances are so *infinitely numerous*. For although it be very plain, that the longer any man lives, the more *ordinarily* he understands and improves in Knowledge; yet if most of us were asked how much we are wiser *now* than we were a *Month* or *two Months* since, it might often puzzle us to answer it, and, though it be plain *we are improved*, to *particularize in what*, as well as it is to *particularize our improvements by the Sacrament*. So that not only those good men, whose growth is apparent; but also several others, who have not particularly

larly discovered it, are bettered in Communicating, by an *improvement of those Graces which they brought along to it.*

But if any Good men are not better'd in the Sacrament, by *improving*; yet are they all,

2. By *continuing in their Goodness, which they must ascribe to it, and for which it is most richly worth their pains to frequent it.*

It is one great Grace and Benefit to all Good men, that they can maintain their present station in Goodness, and not Relapse and fall back into their former sins again. Their *Natural Lusts* are only *kept under*, not *quite extinguish'd* in them, and will grow bold, and strive for Mastery upon any fair occasion. And they are daily in the way of *manifold Temptations*, which awaken them, and give more strength and advantage to them. And they are many times either *wearied* out with *watchings*, or *lull'd asleep* in *secure carelessness*, which makes them lyable to become a prey to them. They are closely beset with Powerful Enemies, and much indanger'd by continual Temptations, and oft-times unguarded and fit to make but a very weak Defence; which are things that would hinder them from *standing* where they are, as well as from *improving* and going further. So that it is a very

very great benefit, and they are much the better by it, if any thing can help them to keep what Grace they have got already, as well as inable them to gain more. This *continuance* in Goodneſs, is leſs indeed than *Improvement*; but yet it is a moſt valuable thing, and of ſo great account, that, were there nothing more to be had by it, for its ſake alone it were moſt richly worth any mans while to come to the Holy Sacrament.

And this Benefit, which all good men hold, ſince they would ceaſe to be good, ſhould they fall from it, all *worthy Receivers* ought to aſcribe as much to the *Communion*, as to any *other* thing. They owe it not to it *alone*, indeed, but to *other* means alſo, *viz.* to *hearing* and *reading the Word*, and *meditating* upon it, which puts them in mind of their Duty, and of the great motives to it; to *Self-examination*, which ſhews them their Falls and Deviations from it; to *ſolemn Vows* and *Promiſes*, which bind them to be careful in it; and to *fervent faithful Prayers*, which bring down Gods Grace and Spirit that inables them to perform it. All *theſe*, and *others*, are great means of ſecuring their ſtanding in an Holy Courſe, amidſt all their Temptations to depart from it; and therefore to every one of them they

they must in part ascribe it. But the Sacrament contributes to it as much, at least, if not more than any thing besides; so that in accounting whence they receive this great benefit, it ought not in any wise to be excluded. For therein they *remember* and *fix in mind the Death of Christ*, which is the highest *motive* to it; and exercise that *Faith*, and *Love*, and *Thankfulness*, and *Resignation*, and *Repentance*, which are the best *means* to set it forward; and make God *solemn Vows* and *Promises*, which are the straitest *bond* to ingage them to it; and put up many *fervent Prayers*, which are the best course to *make way* for it; and receive those *inward Graces* and *Assistances*, as I have shewn, which *inable* them to discharge it. So that when worthy Communicants continue after the Sacrament to hold their present pitch of Goodness, and do not slide back again into their former sins; they must not say they are no better by it, for this benefit *of standing in a good state*, they receive from it. Though it doth not improve and bring them *forward*, yet it helps mightily to continue and keep them where they *are*.

Thus are all good People really bettered by the Sacrament. For, besides the *Peace of Conscience*, which is thereby much

much ſettled in thoſe Penitents, who underſtand and conſider, that therein they have ſeal'd the Covenant of Pardon with Almighty God: Beſides this effect, I ſay, in thoſe who rightly underſtand it; the *Graces of ſome are much improved,* and the *ſtanding of all is greatly maintain'd* by it, which laſt, were there no other expectation from it, is a moſt valuable benefit, and ſuch, wherefore it is highly worth any mans labour to frequent it.

3. *Where they are not bettered at all by the Sacrament, or not ſo much as might be expected, that is purely through their own Fault, and they muſt amend it.*

Where they are not bettered at all by the Sacrament, I ſay, *or not ſo much as might be expected, that is purely through their own Fault.* If they examine their own hearts about it, they will find that they have been wanting in thoſe things, which ſhould have made it a lively means and help to their improvement. It may be, after they have felt in their own Souls that they have *renounced all evil ways,* which might fit them for it; they do not yet perceive any *affecting peace of mind,* and comfortable ſenſe of the Love of God to be wrought by it: but then that is becauſe they do not *conſider,* how therein they confirmed a *League of Love,* and received

received assurance of his Favour to the Penitent. Perhaps they are not *improved* in an *Holy Life*, nor prevail more against their sins after they have joyn'd in it; but then that is because they are *wanting* in those things, which are necessary to such Improvement. They did not *inquire what their particular sins* were, and *deliberately resolve* against them *before* they came to it: nor are careful to *bear in mind* what they have promised, and to *watch the opportunities of performing* it, *after* they have been at it. Had these things been done, and this care been shewn, both *before* and *after* it; they may be assured, as I have shewn, both from the *virtue of Gods Promise*, and the *Nature of the thing*, that they would have been the better by it. But when these means are not used, but omitted, they cannot expect it should have its effect in making them obedient. For the Sacrament helps us to grow in Grace and Goodness, as a *moral means*, which works only in *concurrence with our own care*, but not *without* it. It makes us *leave our sins*, by ingaging us to *examine* after them, and *particularly to resolve* against them, and to *strive* as the opportunities come to get quit of them; and by bringing down such *gracious Assistances* to us, as will serve

our

our turn when we *indeavour* with them. But if we will be wanting to our ſelves in theſe *Self-Examinations*, and *particular Reſolutions*, and *after-care* and *good indeavours*; then can it do us no good, becauſe we will not ſuffer it: and therefore, as we were before, ſo we ſhall continue, the ſame unreform'd, and unimproved perſons ſtill.

Thus is the want of being bettered by the Sacrament, either *at all*, or *ſo much* as might be expected, altogether our *own* Fault; namely, becauſe we come not to it with that *particular ſight* and *conſideration* of *all our ſins*, and *reſolution* againſt them, nor are afterwards ſo *mindful* of it, and ſhew that *care* to *perform* what we have *reſolv'd*, which is neceſſary to our *amendment*: nor have that *conſideration* of its being a *ſealing of the Covenant of Peace* and Reconciliation, which is as neceſſary to our *Comfort* and *Peace of mind from* it. So that whenſoever we fail of that benefit, which ſhould accrue by it, it is purely through our own Neglect, and we muſt thank our ſelves for it.

And ſince this want of being bettered, is wholly our *own Fault*; let all thoſe who are kept back by it, take care to *amend* that, and then this objection is anſwer'd. When they receive no benefit from it,

they

they themſelves are to be blamed for omitting thoſe things which are neceſſary to it; and if they will take care to uſe them the next time, they will be benefited by it: So that this hindrance laſts no longer than they are pleas'd it ſhould, and when they will, need be no hindrance to them at all.

As for thoſe then, that urge this for their not coming to the Sacrament, *viz. Their not being better'd or improved by it*; My Anſwer to them in *ſum* is this. If there be any force in it, it will hold much ſtronger for their not coming to *Prayers*, or the *Publick Aſſemblies*, and ought not ſo much to hinder them from *this Feaſt*, as from all *other* parts of *Worſhip*. But, indeed, it is no juſt hindrance, nor is there any ſufficient excuſe at all from it. Where 'tis *true*, there is no *fair excuſe* in it; becauſe we are not only bound in *Intereſt*, but in *ſtrict Duty* alſo to Communicate. But in the caſe of all *good* men 'tis *falſe*, for they are really the *better* by it, tho' perhaps they do not *think* or *underſtand it*. For it either *improves them in their Goodneſs*, as 'tis highly fit it ſhould and will do all, who are not wanting to themſelves: or at leaſt it *continues* them in it, which, where there is nothing more, is of it ſelf moſt richly worth all the

the pains they beſtow upon it. And where they are not better'd at all, or not ſo much as might be expected; that is purely their *own Fault*, and will hinder them no longer than they have a mind to it; for when they pleaſe they may amend it. If they are *good* men, they are *better* by it; and if they are *ill*, their being no better doth not *excuſe their Neglect* of it; and they may be bettered the *next* time, if they will take that *care* which is neceſſary to it: ſo that this ought not in any wiſe to be an Hindrance, and keep them from it.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of want of Charity.

The Contents.

A Sixth *Hindrance is a Fear leſt they want that Charity, particularly towards Enemies and thoſe who have given them Provocations, which is required to it. An account what Love is, and what is not due to ſuch Perſons.* 1. *We are bound to ſhew them all the Offices of general Charity, which are due to our Neighbour at large, or to all others. This Love contains in it all the Particular Offices of Juſtice, Charity, and Peace, which are due to all mankind: It is tranſgreſſed by all the oppoſite Inſtances, but by nothing more than hard and uncandid Cenſures and Suſpicions. The commonneſs, and ſinfulneſs of this Carriage. The want of this Charity unfits men for this Feaſt; but ſo it doth for Prayers, and all other Religious Worſhip.* 2. *We are not bound to ſhew them all the Offices of ſpecial Eſteem, Truſt, and Confidence, which are not fit to be placed on all men, but on ſuch only as are*

qualified

qualified for them. When they ſufficiently ſhew Repentance of their Fault, they are to be re-admitted to the ſame ſtate of Favour and Friendſhip. We muſt be Candid in Judging when their Repentance is ſufficiently evidenced. An humble Confeſſion is ordinarily a ſufficient Proof of it for the firſt Fault; but not when it has been oft repeated. Luc. 17. 4, *which ſeems to affirm it, anſwer'd. Several Caſes clear'd, which are ſometimes thought by Pious Souls to be a breach of Charity towards Enemies, but in reality are not. As, not forgetting Injuries or Unkindneſſes, but ſtill retaining a Remembrance of them. Thinking the worſe of thoſe who offered them. Being troubled at the ſight of them, as that puts them in mind of the great Loſſes they have ſuſtain'd by them. Shewing more reſerve, and carrying a greater diſtance in Converſing with them, than with other men. Theſe are no breach of Charity towards them, nor can be a juſt Hindrance from the Communion.*

A *Sixth* Hindrance, which keeps back ſeveral from this Feaſt, is their *fear leſt they want that Charity which is required to it.* They have ſome *profeſt Enemies*, that own Hatred and a miſchievous inclinati-

inclination in all their Carriage; or ſome *falſe Friends* and *Confidents*, who, though not out of *Malice*, yet to ſerve a *particular turn* or *intereſt*, have proved very unfaithful or injurious; or ſome *imprudent* and *unwiſe Dependants*, who, when they meant well, perhaps, have done things very diſadvantageous and diſpleaſing to them in their buſineſs. From the *Malice of ſome*, or the *Falſeneſs of others*, or the *folly of a third* ſort, they have received thoſe Provocations, which they cannot yet caſt out of their minds; and when they remember them, they feel their hearts are much eſtranged from thoſe who offered them; and whilſt they are ſo, they fear they love them not as they ought, nor have that Charity towards Enemies and injurious Perſons, which God requires in all Communicants.

And this *want of Charity* for *Enemies* and *offenſive* Perſons is urged, not only by thoſe, who either *do*, or *wiſh* ill to them, who indeed have juſt cauſe to ſay they want it: but alſo by others who incur neither of them, and therefore have no ſufficient cauſe at all for it. For many Good People, who requite no injuries to thoſe who have provoked them,

ſtice, *Charity*, and *Peace*, which God requires of us towards *all men*, and which are all that is *due to them*: are yet afraid that they have not ſo much Charity for them as the Law injoyns, becauſe they *ſtill remember their Injuries* or *Unkindneſſes*, or *think the worſe of their Perſons*, or *keep a greater diſtance from them in their Carriage*, or *forbear to uſe them*, as formerly they did, *in the quality of particular Friends and Confidents*, or with-hold ſome other *ſpecial Favours*, which are not due to them, nor are any breach at all of that Charity, which they ought to have for them.

This is a great cauſe of *Scruple* to many honeſt minds, who are really troubled with it: and particularly it is a moſt common *hindrance* from the Holy Sacrament; there being no Duty, I think, which the generality of men believe more indiſpenſably required, than *Peace* and *Charity* in every worthy Communicant. And therefore that they who *want* this Love of Enemies, which unfits them for this Feaſt, may quickly ſet about the attainment of it; and that they who *have* it, may not be troubled, or held back from receiving as if they had it not; I ſhall here indeavour to give a plain ſtate of it, and ſhew, both *what is*, and *what*

is not imply'd in it. And this I ſhall do in theſe *two* particulars.

1. *We are bound to ſhew our Enemies*, and any others who have *provoked us*, *all the Offices of general Charity*, *or all that Love which is due to our Neighbour at large*, *and to all other Perſons*. So that whilſt we allow ous ſelves in the *breach* of *this*, we are *unfit* for this Feaſt, and muſt inſtantly *amend* that we may be fitted for it.

But,

2. *We are not bound to ſhew them all the Offices of ſpecial Eſteem*, *Truſt*, *and Confidence*, *which are not fit to be placed on all men*, *but on ſuch only as are qualified for them*. So that when we fail only in *theſe*, we are in no *Fault*, nor have any need to be *troubled*, or *kept back* by it.

1. I ſay, *We are bound to ſhew our Enemies*, and any others, who, by their *unkind*, *indiſcreet*, or *injurious* carriage, have *provoked* us, *all the Offices of General Charity*, or *all that Love which is due to our Neighbour at large*, *and to all other Perſons*: So that if we allow our ſelves in the breach of *it*, we are unfit for this Feaſt, and muſt inſtantly amend that we may be fitted for it.

We are bound to ſhew them all the Offices of general Charity, or to treat them with *all that Love which is due to our Neighbour at large*, and *to all other Perſons*. How

How hardly ſoever they might be treated either among *Jews* or *Gentiles*, yet in *Chriſtianity* our *Enemies* are *Neighbours* and *Brethren*, and ought to ſhare in all that Love, which God requires of us towards the promiſcuous Multitude of other men. For it takes off all that *hatred* and *ſpiteful Reſentment*, which would exclude them from all good Offices; and ſets them in the Rank of *Neighbours*, whom God commands us to treat with all thoſe inſtances of Kindneſs, wherein conſiſts the *loving our Neighbour as our ſelves*. This is plain, from its not permitting us *to hate*, as the *Jewiſh Law did*, but ſtrictly injoyning us *to Love them*, *Mat.* 5. 44, 45; for where *Love* is, it naturally iſſues out in all of them as there is occaſion, upon which account it is call'd *the fulfilling of the Law*, i. e. of that part of it which concerns us towards men, becauſe *working no ill*, as St. *Paul* ſays, *to our Neighbour*, it leads us into all of them, *Rom.* 13. 9, 10. Beſides, that our Enemies are to ſhare in all that Love which is due to our Neighbours, our Saviour plainly declares, when he ſingles out a moſt *bitter Enemy*, and ſets him forth as the *Neighbour* whom the Law mentions, making the *Samaritane* a Neighbour even to a *Jewiſh* man, be-

tween whom there was the moſt inveterate and inbred Enmity and Oppoſition. For when the *Lawyer* asked him, *who is my Neighbour*; he tells him by the *Parable* of a *Jewiſh man*, who being *left wounded by the Thieves*, found a *Neighbour* of the *good Samaritane*, that 'tis any one he meets with, though a *Stranger*, though an *Enemy*, yea, though of a *Party* and *Profeſſion in Religion* moſt *odious* unto his, which ordinarily cauſes the higheſt and moſt implacable Enmities, as it did between the *Jews* and *Samaritanes*, who ſtood at ſo great a diſtance, as that they would not *give* or *ask* ſo much as *a* † *Cup of Water* of each other, or have any ſort of entercourſe together. This was his Neighbour, ſays he, and ſo muſt thou be in a like Caſe, *go, and do ſo likewiſe*, *Luke* 10. *v.* 29, to 38.

† Joh. 4. 9.

Thus are all we Chriſtians bound to hold our Enemies, and thoſe who have provoked us, in the ſame promiſcuous Rank with all others, and notwithſtanding all their unkindneſs, or injurious Carriage, to look upon them as our Neighbours, whom we are to Love as we do our ſelves.

And that Love contains in it all the *particular* Offices of *Juſtice*, *Charity*, and *Peace*,

Peace, which we owe to *Mankind at large*, even to all Persons.

1. It contains in it all the Duties of *Justice*; as namely, that we be *true* to them in all our *Speeches*, and *faithful* in all our *Promises*, and *just* and *equal* in all our *Dealings*, never *seizing*, *hurting*, or *detaining* any thing which belongs to them; nor any ways *perverting*, *obstructing*, or *infringing* any Right, because 'tis theirs.

2. All the Duties of *Charity*, as that we *honour* them for their *Virtues*, and *pity* them in their *Miseries*, and *relieve* them in their *Wants*; and, when they will take it, not *passionately* and *publickly* (which shews not any *Love* of them, but our *Wrath* and *Spleen* against them) but with great *Privacy* and *Friendship*, *reprove* them for their *Faults*, and *Congratulate* with them in their *Joys*, and *conceal* their *Defects*, and *vindicate* their *injured Reputations*, and be *Courteous* and *Condescensive*, *Meek* and *Gentle* in our *Carriage*, *Candid* in putting a good Interpretation upon all their *Words* and *Actions*, especially such as relate to our *own selves*, *placable* or easie to be intreated after any *Offences*, and apt to *forgive* and *requite* them with *soft Speech*, *fair Carriage*, *good Offices*, and the like.

3. All the Duties of *Peace*, in maintaining *Unity* and *Quietneſs*, and avoiding all *Strife* and *Variance*, *Clamour* and *Brawling* with them, as with all Mankind.

† Meaſ. *of* Chriſt. Obed. *B.* 2.

All theſe, as I have †elſewhere particularly ſhewn, are ſuch Duties as we owe to our *Neighbour at large*, and to *all men*: and then to our *Enemies* among them, ſince in Chriſtianity they are *Brethren* and *Neighbours* too, and have a claim to them. And theſe, *Love* and *Brotherly kindneſs*, when once it is ſeated in us, will be ſure to effect, and make us pay them. For *he that Loveth another*, as St. *Paul* ſaith, *hath fulfill'd the Law. Becauſe this, thou ſhalt not commit Adultery, thou ſhalt not kill, thou ſhalt not ſteal, thou ſhalt not bear falſe Witneſs, thou ſhalt not covet; and if there be any other Commandment*, i. e. reſpecting others, *it is briefly comprehended in this ſaying, Thou ſhalt Love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf. Love works no ill to his Neighbour, therefore Love is the fullfilling of the Law.* Rom. 13. 8, 9, 10.

And ſince we are bound to Love our *Enemies*, in paying them all this *Juſtice*, *Charity*, and *Peace*, which I have mentioned as due to *all Perſons*: 'tis plain that we

we fail of it, whensoever we act against it in any of these *Particulars.*

1. We fail of it if at any time we do any *wrong*, or shew any acts of *Injustice* towards them. As if we *falsify* and *lye* to them, or *break* our *Faith* and *Promise* with them, or *raise Calumnies*, or *report false* and *slanderous Stories* of them, or *bear false witness* against them, or *wrongfully with-hold* what is due to them, or *oppress*, *cozen*, or *defraud* them, or *take away* their *Lives*, or *maim* their Bodies, by *Secret Arts*, or *open Fight*, or *Assassination*, or the like.

2. We fail of it, if in any instance we are *uncharitable*, or *break* the *Peace* with them. As when we *envy* and *repine* at their *good*, or *rejoyce* at their *hurt*, or, when we could wipe them off, *suffer false stains* to *stick* upon them without any *Vindication*, or *speak* all the *ill* we know of them, and *backbite* and *revile* them, especially if we do it with *Aggravation*, *Triumph*, and *Scorn*, when any fall of theirs has given us an occasion, or *openly upbraid* them with our *kindnesses*, or *reproach* them with their *own sins*, or *mock* and *deride* them with their *Infirmities*, or *affront* them in our *Carriage*, or are *Passionate*, and burst out into *bitterness* and

brawling, *ſtrife* and *debate* upon any provocation, or are *unthankfully forgetful* of their *former favours*, or *implacable* after their *injuries*, or *thirſt* after *revenge*, and are *haſty* to *puniſh*, or *rigorous in exactions*, or ſuch like.

All *theſe* are a Breach of that Love and Duty, which we ought to bear towards our Enemies in common with all other perſons, as might be proved, were there any need of it, of *every one* of the particulars. And by reaſon they have deſerv'd ill of us, and given us great provocations; unleſs we are very circumſpect, and keep a ſtrict Guard upon our ſelves, in all our Diſcourſes and Carriage towards them, we ſhall be in great danger to incur them.

But among all the inſtances of uncharitableneſs to our Enemies, there is none whereto we are more obnoxious, and againſt which we ought to watch with greater carefulneſs, as we tender the ſafety of our own Souls, than *hard Cenſures* and *Suſpicions*, or *fancying the worſt Deſigns*, and *putting the worſt Interpretations* upon all their *words* and *actions* when they come before us.

This, God knows, is a moſt *general* and *Reigning* ſin among *all Adverſaries*, and is daily ſeen, not only among the *notoriouſly*

riously ill and *irreligious*, but also among those, who are otherwise very *sober* and *devoutly serious*. For even the generality of men, when the Actions of their Enemies come to be scann'd before them, are very apt to turn them to an ill sense, and to make the most of them to their prejudice, and judge of them, not as indifferent and unconcern'd persons, but as they who desire to find Faults, and to pick out something which they may accuse in them.

And this has been every where done, not only against *particular persons*, but, on all hands, against *whole Bodies* and *Parties* of Men, who, in any thing relating to the Times, are of different Perswasions, and either *think* or *act* not after their *Projects* and *Opinions*. For how apt have, not only *private* men been in the case of particular quarrels; but many also in the heat, and at the top of *all Parties*, in judging of their opposites to mistrust *ill* Designs even in their *good* Actions, and to impute all their ill to *unmixt Malice*, without making any allowances of *forgetfulness*, *over-sight*, *impetuous heat*, or other humane Frailties; to take every thing by the *wrong* handle, and where it *might*, and *would* bear a *good*, were there any Love to construe it, to

ſix upon it an *ill* Senſe, and to interpret it to their diſadvantage. In arguing upon all their words and actions, they ſuck'd out nothing but the venome, and turn'd every thing into a ſore about them, and were ſtrangely raſh in beſtowing *opprobrious* and *ill* Names upon them, and laid about them at that rate, as if they fancied they could not exceed, either in *thinking*, or in *ſpeaking* evil of them. In all which, inſtead of being check'd with any Remorſe for it, their *Conſciences* rather countenanced and encouraged it. For ſince, as they apprehended, the cauſe they contended for was good in their *own Party*, and bad in the *Party* that *oppoſed* it: This Carriage they call'd not *wrath* and *ſpite*, but *Zeal*, and thought accordingly that God would own and accept it.

But this is a very *ſinful* and *unchriſtian* Carriage. It is utterly contrary to the *Love of Enemies*; for Love is always inclinable to think the beſt, and leans, ſo far as the thing will bear, to the ſide of Favour, both in *judging*, and *ſpeaking* of all their Actions. It is plainly contrary to our *Lords Rule*, who warns us *not to judge that we be not judged*, i. e. not to be forward in paſſing Sentence againſt others, that God may not paſs Sentence againſt

gainſt us: *for with what meaſure we mete* in judging of their Actions, *he will mete out to us again*, *Mat.* 7. 1, 2. It is a direct Breach of that *Charity* which St. *Paul* deſcribes, and makes of abſolute neceſſity to our immortal happineſs. For *Charity*, ſays he, *thinks* or ſurmizes *no Evil*, it *believes all things*, ſo far as in any reaſon it may, to other mens advantage. And *without* this *Charity*, though we have the *ſpritelieſt Zeal* for the beſt Parties, nay, *though* we *give our Bodies to be burned* as Martyrs, *it profits* us *nothing*, *i. e.* towards Gods acceptance, 1 *Cor.* 13. 3, 5, 7. Since it is a *Zeal*, which is not *peaceable* as well as *pure*, ſince it is not *full of Mercy* and *good Fruits*, but iſſues out in a *bitter* and *invenom'd* Spirit, which turns all things to the worſt, and is bent in all points to the hurt of thoſe who fall under it; 'tis plain it can never come from *God*, who, being *Mercy* and *Love* it ſelf, can never be the Author of ſo much *Cruelty* and *Hatred*; but muſt be aſcribed to our own *Luſts*, and the *infernal Spirits*, as the true Parents and Abettors of it. And this St. *James* expreſly ſays of that *bitter Zeal*, which takes not a *tender Heart*, and *bowels of Love* or *Charity* along with it. If it were that *from above*, ſaith he, *it* would *firſt* indeed *be pure*, but then it would

would next be *peaceable*, *gentle*, *easie to be intreated*, *full of Mercy and good Fruits*. If God kindled it, since he is Love it self, and requires us to Love our Enemies as our selves, these Fruits of Love and Mercy would be sure to accompany it. But if all these are shut out, and it dwells in an hurtful and imbittered Spirit; if that be a *bitter envying* or † *Zeal*, that dwells *in your Hearts*: then, adds he, *glory not* in it; *for this descends not from above*, so as to have God for the Author of it, *but is sensual*, *i. e.* arising from your own Passions, nay, *Devillish*, being set on by the malicious Agency of Infernal Spirits, *Jam.* 3. 14,15,16,17.

† Πικρὸν ζῆλον.

And thus it appears when really we are out of Charity with any persons who have provoked us, and fall short of that Love of Enemies, which Gods Law requires of us: For then we Love them not as we ought, when we are any ways *unjust* to them, or apt upon every little occasion to *strive* and *contend* with them, or deal *uncharitably* by them in any Conversation, particularly in *malicious Surmizes* and *Suspicions*, and *uncandid Censures*, which are so general in *all*, but more abundant in *our* times, when the *Nation* is divided into *Parties*, and men seem

ſeem to have forgot that there is *any Religion towards Enemies*, or any Love due to them who have given them perſonal Provocations, or ſide with a Party oppoſite to what they eſpouſe.

And if upon a ſurvey of our Carriage in theſe particulars, we find this to be our Caſe, and that we are thus out of Charity, and have not forgiven any who have provoked us: 'tis very true, whilſt that laſts we are *unfit for the Sacrament*, ſince he that worthily joyns in it, muſt come in *Love*, and have freely forgiven all the World. But then we are alſo equally unfit to *pray*, or ask the *forgiveneſs of our own ſins* at Gods hands; ſince, if we pray in *Wrath* and *Enmity*, he will not hear us. Nay, this *not forgiving others* turns all our own Prayers into a *Curſe*, and makes them a dreadful and downright *Imprecation* againſt our ſelves. For when we ſay this Prayer—*forgive us our treſpaſſes as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us*, with *malice* in our Hearts: the plain *Engliſh* of it is, that God would *revenge our Treſpaſſes* on *our* heads, as we are ready to *revenge their Treſpaſſes* on *theirs*: which is ſo bold, and Fool-hardy an Addreſs, as no man, I preſume, will put up to God, who conſiders what he ſays.

When really we are out of Charity therefore,

therefore, and have not forgiven others; we are not only unfit to Communicate, but to the full as unfit to make any Prayers, or place any Hope in Almighty God. And when once he is ſenſible that this is his State, there is no wiſe man will continue in it, but will forthwith reſolve to lay aſide all his Reſentments, and get out of it.

This he may find *difficult*, indeed, when he ſets about it; but it is *abſolutely neceſſary* to be done, and unleſs he would incur the Wrath of God, and the Eternal pains of Hell, which are ten thouſand times *more* difficult, he muſt go through with it. But if he conſiders how much he himſelf needs to be forgiven, and how he has infinitely more provoked God, than his Brother has provoked him; he will find it no very hard matter to forgive him for *Chriſts* ſake, though it might be hard to do it for his *own*. And beſides, if he will not dwell upon the injuries or unkindneſſes which are ſo provoking, but *caſt them out* ſo ſoon as he perceives they are enter'd into his mind; it will yet be much eaſier to him. He cannot *quite forget* them, it may be, ſo as that he ſhall never think of them: but when without his leave they ſtart up in his thoughts, he can chuſe whether

whether he will *harbour* and give way to them. And if he will be careful to do that, the great difficulty of Forgiveneſs is removed. For it is our dwelling upon an injury received, and hearkening to ill ſuggeſtions that *aggravate* the deed, and the *malice* or *unworthineſs* of him that offered it, which heightens our Reſentment of it to that Degree, that we have much ado before we can bring our ſelves to be reconciled. So that if we would not harbour and entertain the thoughts of it, the forgiveneſs of an injury would have much more eaſe in it. And this Remedy St. *Paul* preſcribes to prevent all *Wrath* and *Revengeful Carriage*. *Let not the Sun go down upon your Wrath, neither give place to the Devil,* or to a † Calumniator and Accuſer, *i. e.* to exaſperating Thoughts and Inſinuations, whether ſuggeſted to us by our own minds, or by the whiſperings of others, *Eph.* 4. 26, 27.

† τῷ διαβόλῳ.

And thus having proved that we *are bound* to ſhew our *Enemies*, and thoſe who have *provoked* us, *all the Offices of general Charity*, or all that *Love* which is due to our *Neighbour at large*, and to *all other Perſons*; ſo that whilſt we allow our ſelves in the breach of them we are unfit for this

this Feast, and must instantly amend, that we may be fitted for it: I proceed now,

2. To shew that we *are not bound to shew them all the Offices of special esteem, trust and confidence, which are not fit to be placed on all men*, but *on such only as are qualified for them*: so that when we fail only in these, we are in no fault, nor have any need to be troubled, or kept back by it.

We are not bound to make an Enemy a *familiar Companion*, or a *particular Friend*, a *Partner* of our *Secrets*, a *Sharer* of our *Trust*, or an *Officer* in our *business*: but may be more afraid of him, and keep more at a distance from him, and use more Caution and Reserve in conversing with him, than with other men. As for all the instances of *general* Charity, indeed, they are due upon a Reason which is *common* to our Enemies with others, *i. e.* their being *Men* and *Christians*: so that they ought to share in them, and we fail of our Duty to them, when at any time we with-hold *them* from them. But as for these marks of *special* esteem and confidence; they are founded on *particular* reasons and fitness of Persons, as *likeness of humour*, *Fidelity of Affection*, *aptness for our affairs*, or the like; so that in them we are not bound to our *Enemies*, who are plainly unfit through their *profest*

feſt Enmity, or *treacherous falſeneſs*; nay, nor to any *one* among *others*; but are left at Liberty to make ſuch choice as ſhall ſeem beſt to our *Prudence*. This Liberty muſt in all *Equity* and *Reaſon* be allowed us, becauſe upon a right choice of theſe Perſons the *innocence*, *eaſe*, and *ſafety* of our Lives, moſt nearly depends; and without being left to diſcretion in it, we muſt unavoidably throw our ſelves into inextricable Snares, and numberleſs Calamities. And that it is allowed, our Saviour clearly intimates, when he recommends to us the *wiſdom of Serpents*, bidding us ſhew all the prudence we can deviſe, ſo long as no unrighteouſneſs mixes with it, but it is wholly guided by the *Doves innocence*, *Mat.* 10. 16. And in this he has gone before us in his *own Practice*. For though he loved thoſe *who believed on him*, *Joh.* 2. with all that Love which his Law requires, *i. e.* with a *general Affection*: yet, as the *Evangeliſt* tells us, *he did not* truſt or *commit himſelf to them, becauſe he knew all men*, v. 23, 24.

So long then as we *requite no Injuries* upon our Enemies, or others that have offended us, nor are wanting to them in any point of *Juſtice*, *Charity*, or *Peace*, which is due to all Perſons; we are not uncharitable to them, in *thinking the worſe* of

of their persons, or *carrying* our selves towards them at a *greater distance*, or *forbearing* to use them, as formerly we did, in the quality of *particular Friends* and *Confederates*, or *withdrawing* some other *special Favours*, which their Fault has justly forfeited, and they have no more claim to.

Indeed, if afterwards they *Repent* of their Offence which makes the breach between us, and amend that Fault which unfits them for our *Business* or *Converse*, when only we *our selves* are concern'd, and the thing is not of that weight as that we may be *jealous* over it, and we have no other cause but that offence to exclude them from it; 'tis a Christian Part, not only to retain them in a general Charity in common with all other Persons, but also to re-admit them to the *same* State, which formerly they held with us.

When the concern is not purely *our own*, but we are set to secure *higher* and more *publick ends*; there, 'tis true, we are not bound presently to re-admit to the same state upon Repentance. And thus it is in the point of *Discipline*, wherein the Sin is not presently pardoned so soon as the Criminal has Repented of it: but the punishment is oft-times continued, (as it was in the *lasting Excommunications* of the *Primitive Christians*)

Chriſtians) that the durableneſs of the ſmart may both more *terrifie others* from it, and *amend themſelves* by begetting a more laſting memory and abhorrence of it. And thus 'tis too in point of *Publick Truſt*, when we act not for our ſelves, but purſuant to our care of others: for there we may lay aſide *Penitents*, becauſe they have once ſinn'd, thinking there is more ſafety in thoſe who have ſtill ſtood firm, and been always innocent. And thus St. *Paul* did with *Mark*, who had † once declined the toil and peril of *Converting the Gentile World*; for after he had freely forgiven it, yet, ſays St. *Luke*, in the diſpute betwixt *Barnabas* and *him*, *he thought not good to take him* for a Companion, becauſe he once deſerted them, and *went not with them to the work*; but prefer'd *Silas*, who had never flinch'd from it, *Act.* 15. 37, 38, 40.

† Act. 13. 13.

But when only *we* our *ſelves* are concerned; and the thing is not of that weight as that we may be *jealous* over it, (in which caſe, indeed, a greater Caution is requiſite;) and we have *no other Cauſe* but *that Offence* to exclude them from it: (for if upon other accounts the choice at firſt was ill made, and either already *is*, or *may* be altered to our Benefit, ſince the

the fixing on any man for a Friend or Dependant is not a neceſſary Duty, but a diſcretionary free thing, we are not blame-worthy in correcting it:) when the Caſe, I ſay, is thus, 'tis a *Chriſtian* act to admit returning *Penitents* to the *ſame* ſtate they held before they offended us. For when once they have Repented of a Fault, they are as fit for our *Affairs* or *Friendſhip*, as they were before they committed it. So that if any marks of our diſpleaſure remain ſtill after that, which in the preſent ſtate of things might conveniently enough be alter'd, it is not *their unfitneſs*, but *our Reſentment* which is the cauſe of it. And when we go ſo to *eaſe* our offended minds by their *loſs*, this looks not like *forgiving a Treſpaſs*, but *Revenging* it. And this Re-admiſſion to their former ſtate, is according to St. *Pauls* Direction, *Col.* 3. 13. *to forgive others, even as Chriſt forgives us*; for he admits Penitents to the ſtate of innocent Perſons, pardoning without upbraiding, and quite † *forgetting*, as if the ſin had never been done: and according to what he preſcribes, 1 Cor. 14. 20. when he bids us *in malice to be Children*; for after once they are made Friends, they forget all, and return to the

† Heb. 8. 12.

the same degree of Love and Confidence again. The *wise Son* of *Sirach* says, indeed, that for *four things*, viz. *upbraiding, and Pride, and disclosing of Secrets, and a Treacherous wound, every Friend will depart*, and never more be reconciled, *Eccles.* 22. 22. But he speaks only of what *ordinarily is done*, or of what *might have been done among the Jews*; not of what *may now be done* among us, of whom God expects an higher forgiveness, after the manner of *Children*, and the example of *Christ Jesus*. So that when once they have sufficiently Repented, 'tis fit that we forgive them to as full purpose, as if they had never sinn'd at all.

And in judging of this Repentance, we ought not to be *strict* and *rigid* in standing upon exact proofs; but to be *candid*, and apt to interpret all signs of it to the best Sence, leaning to the side of Love and easie Admittance. If they take shame to themselves, and are so far humbled as *penitently to confess* it: 'tis a great Argument of their being set against it, and, in the case of the *first* offence especially, a strong Presumption that they will no more commit it. Although, when once these Confessions become *Customary*, and are still made and broke anew

anew upon every fresh occasion: it is a sign only that they mean well, and *would* amend if they could; but no Presumption that they *will* do it, since their penitent Resolution plainly is too weak, and their Lusts prove still too strong for it. And since these Confessions are manifestly an incompetent proof of their having thorowly Repented; we cannot be bound to believe them, or obliged thereupon to a return of Friendship.

Our Saviour indeed tells us, That *if our Brother Trespass against us seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again, saying, I repent; we must forgive him*, Luc. 17. 4. And here, if by *forgiving*, were meant *restoring to the same state of Favour* and *Affection*; this would infer his Profession of Repentance, tho' never so often broke, to be a sufficient Demonstration of it, and a just Ground of his return to Friendship. But this, I suppose, speaks only of such Forgiveness, as admits him, not to the *same* state which before he held with us, but only to the state of a *Neighbour at large*, or of all other Persons. And albeit this is due to him, whether he say, *I Repent*, or no; yet doth our Saviour here injoin it upon his Repentance, not because the *thing* required it, but that he might more directly

rectly oppose the *Jewish* Doctrine in this point, which was too scanty in forgiving even a *returning Penitent*. For this they limited to a small number of times, it being a received Rule among the *Rabbins*, that † *after he has forgiven any Person thrice, he has gone as far as he needs, and that no man is bound to forgive the fourth offence.*

† *Dr. Lightf.* Hor. Heb. in loc. è Jom.

To forgive an injury then so far as not to return it, nor to be wanting in any Neighbourly office towards him that offered it, is a plain Duty, upon his saying he Repents of it: yea, as has been shewn, whether he Repents or not. But to the evidencing of such Repentance as would oblige us to confide in him again, and leaves *no imputation of unfitness in him*, but only *our Resentment* for a Reason of our distance from him: we may require more than his *saying he Repents*, and giving us his bare word and promise, after they have several times deceived us. For no *wise* man would trust to that which is oftner wrong than right, as every such Persons word is, who hitherto has always failed in it: and Christianity in no case forbids us to be *wise* in our own Concerns, but directs us to *be* as *subtle as Serpents*, so long as we are careful withal to keep as

as *innocent as Doves*, *Mat.* 10. 16. It commends us for being *prudent* in buſineſs, andſeeing before-hand to prevent *other mens ſins*, by cutting off from them all opportunities; and it may be *our own* too, by putting by thoſe Temptations, which would *always* trouble and moleſt our *Peace*, and *often-times* indanger our *innocence*. So that although we are to be very *favourable* in conſtruing the ſufficiency of our Enemies Repentance; yet may we be *diſcreet* withall, and are not to be *fooliſhly blind* and unreaſonably eaſie in approving it. We muſt only lean to the ſide of Favour, when there are ſuch ſigns, as to a Wiſe man look towards it; but not raſhly conclude it, when there are no likely ſigns at all of it. But the fault of men ſeldom lies on this ſide, of being *over-eaſie to be fully reconciled*; ſo that the other, of being *over-rigid*, is that which the generality of men ought to guard themſelves againſt. And therefore in judging of the ſufficiency of their Repentance, this is the great Rule we are to take along with us, *viz.* That *as* it is *one* part of Charity *fully to forgive our offending Brother*, and re-admit him to our *former* favour on his *Repentance*: So 'tis *another* to be *favourable* in judging whether he has *ſufficiently Repented*, and given ſuch proofs

proofs of it as ought to be believed, or no.

As for these further effects of Love towards Enemies, and those who have provoked us then, *viz. our not barely retaining them in a general Charity and Affection*, as we do *all other men*, but *re-admitting them to special Trust*, *Familiarity* and *Friendship*, which they had in their *former Station*; they are not always *due* to them, nor are at all *proper* to be placed on them, but only when they *Repent* and *Amend* those Faults which made them *unfit* for them. So that whilst their *Impenitence* lasts, or that change doth not *sufficiently appear* to us, we are not obliged to express our Love in these at all.

And since we are not bound to them, nor are guilty of any sin in omitting them; that omission can never unfit us for the *Holy Communion*. So that whilst we shew them all the Offices of *general kindness*, and are wanting in nothing but *special Favours*, which belong not to them in their present Circumstances; we have all the Charity for them which our Lord requires, and therefore, if we have nothing else to hinder us, may readily join in this Feast of Love when God invites us to it.

And this might serve for a sufficient Answer, to those *supposed* instances of *un-*

charitableneſs mentioned above, which hinder ſeveral *fit* and *worthy* Perſons from partaking in this Ordinance. But for their *fuller* ſatisfaction in theſe points, I will add ſomething concerning each of the *Particulars*.

1. They fear they have not that Charity for *Enemies* and *offenſive Perſons*, which Gods Law requires, becauſe *they cannot forget as well as forgive*, but ſtill *remember their injuries or unkindneſſes*.

But did not our *Saviour* himſelf, that perfect pattern of Forgiveneſs, remember † *Peters Denial* of him after he had *bitterly Repented* of it? Did he not ſufficiently hint it to him, by queſtioning him *three times* about his *Love of him*, anſwerable to his having *three times denied him*; that by calling it over upon his Remembrance, he might increaſe his care and watchfulneſs againſt it afterwards? So that 'tis not the *bare* Remembrance, but remembring them to *evil purpoſes*, which is to be blamed in us. When they bear in mind the ill they have received then, let them conſider whether they do it to any ill effect. Do they think of it to *upbraid them with it*, or to *do* them a *ſhame for it*, and ſit as *Spyes* upon their Actions only that they may *find*

† Jo. 21. 15, 16, 17.

¶ *Faults*,

Faults, and *aggravate Miſcarriages*, or to return the ill to them again in tranſgreſſing any of thoſe inſtances of *common Juſtice* or *Charity* above recited? If their Remembrance of it doth not provoke them, into any of theſe ſinful expreſſions of *hatred* and *ill will* againſt them, they need not be troubled at it, for there is no hurt done by it. It is not in *their Power*, it may be, perfectly to forget it; for when the knowledge of things is once fix'd in our minds, though we can forbear to *reflect* on it, wherein lies the great danger of it, yet can we not *loſe* it when we have a mind to it. So that after we have received an Injury, we are not to be blamed barely for remembring it; ſince we are no more *able* always wholly to *forget* what has *paſt*, than we were at *firſt* to be wholly *ignorant* and *inſenſible* of it. Nay, in many Caſes, if we *could*, it is not *adviſable* that we *ſhould* do it: for whilſt the injurious Perſon is *Impenitent*, and ready to repeat the ſame again, the Remembrance of it will do us good, in *quickning our care*, and making us more *wary* and *watchful* to prevent it. But if once he has *Repented* of what he did, ſo as that he ought to be admitted to his *former ſtate*; then, indeed, it may ſeem very deſirable, that as much as in us lies,

we ſhould *forget* it, by giving no entertainment or incouragement to the Thoughts of it. For the Remembrance then can ſerve no good ends, but may prove a very great ſnare to us, in making us *backward in kindneſs*, or *fit to catch fire on ſmall Provocations*, or *uncandid* in *interpreting* his *words*, or *actions* afterwards. It will not be our *ſin* till theſe, or ſome other ill effects are wrought by it; but it will be our *Temptation*, whereby 'tis very like, we ſhall ſometimes be much indanger'd; ſo that then it may be very fit to lay it aſide, for fear of receiving hurt by it.

2. They fear that, after an *unkindneſs* or *injury* received, they are not ſo *Charitable* as they ought, becauſe *they think the worſe of him that offered it.*

Now if they are *uncandid* in *judging of the injurious action*, *i. e.* if they impute it to the worſt cauſe, and make not thoſe Allowances of *forgetfulneſs*, *over-ſight*, and the like, which it would well admit, and which Love would fix upon it were it to conſtrue it: 'tis true, they are ſo far wanting in it. This, indeed, is hard for us always to avoid, and therefore we muſt be ſure to take the more care, and keep the ſtricter watch againſt it. And if after all, through *unwarineſs*, through

all

an Accusers laying out only the interpretations of the ill side, or *our own suspicious temper insensibly leaning towards it*, we are ingaged in an uncandid Construction e're we can discover it; there our *inconsideration* and *unadvisedness* will be our excuse for it. But so soon as ever we can *observe* it, or are shewn how the action is equally capable of a *favourable Sense*, we must strike in with *it*, and correct our *hasty* Judgment. So that if by *thinking worse*, they mean that they think worse than needs of the *Action*, and incur an *uncandid interpretation*; this is the Sentence they are to pass upon it. Either it was an *innocently inconsiderate escape*, and then their *haste* and *unadvisedness* must *excuse* it: or it was a *known sin*, *i. e.* it either was, or, had they not been grosly partial and evidently bent to think ill, would have been committed with observation; and then their *Repentance* and Amendment must *atone* for it.

But if by *thinking worse*, they mean, that, when the Fact is evidently ill, they have a *worse opinion of the Person*; there is no want of Charity in that, because they have just cause for it, and cannot in Reason think better of him. They judge only according to the plain *Truth* of things, and that the best Souls may

safely do, and it is no uncharitable part in any of them. For thus our *Lord* thought of *Judas*, when he † Luc. 22. 48. most affectingly † suggested to him the baseness of *his Betraying him*, and that too *with a Kiss*, the sign of Friendship and Affection. And thus the *Apostles* thought of the *Jews*, whom they looked † Act. 2. 23. and 7. 52. upon as † *wicked Murderers* for our Saviours Crucifixion. And thus St. *Paul* thought of *Peter*, when he blamed him † Gal. 2. 11, 12, 13, 14. for his † *sinful complyance* and *dissimulation*. And thus *God* himself thinks of *us* upon our miscarriages, for he sees them, and dislikes us for them, † Luc. 6. 35. and thereby † magnifies the Honour of his *Patience* and *loving Kindness*, in that he is *good* even to *the unthankful and the evil*, and shews us Favour notwithstanding them. And thus also may we very *innocently*, and *charitably* too think ill of any others, when they have evidently deserv'd it, and given us just occasion for it. For the work of *Charity*, or Love to others, is not to make us blind in a plain Case, and see no Faults in them when they are clear before us. For this is *Love without Eyes*,

Eyes, which is by no means the *Love of wise men*, or the *Charity of Christians*. It is not always *possible in Nature*, nor could be shewn if we should attempt it; for, when others Faults are evident, there is no way of being dark against the Sun, or shutting out the Light whilst our Eyes are opened. But if it always could be done, yet is it not in any wise proper to be *advised*: for if we must see no hurt in any Persons, it unavoidably destroys all wise *choice* of *Friends* and *Companions*, *Relations* and *Dependants*; all seasonable *Counsel* and *Instruction*, *Reproof* and *Admonition*; and so produces most sad effects, both in *Conversation* and *Religion*. The work of Charity to others then, is not to wink against a Fault when 'tis *apparent*; but not to be *quick in discerning*, and *forward in presuming* it, when there is *no just Cause* for it. So that if we would be Charitable to our Enemies, we must not believe ill of them, till it is sufficiently made out to us; nor conclude them faulty in a doubtful case, when there are Reasons on both sides, and they are as likely to be otherwise; nor presume they had an ill design in that which lies as open to a good, and might have no hurt at all in it. In these Cases, where their offence is not clearly proved, it is uncharitable-

neſs in us to be haſty in believing it. But when their *Enmity* is *profeſt*, and their *Unkindneſs*, or *Injurious dealing* is *evident*; 'tis no Duty in any man to ſhut his Eyes againſt the Light, nor any Uncharitableneſs at all to eſteem them the leſs for it. We may think him a *Diſhoneſt man*, that has *injured* us; and him a *Falſe Friend*, that has *betrayed our Secrets* to our Prejudice, as our Saviour *Chriſt* did *Judas*; and that he is not ſo *kind* as he *profeſſes*, who, when he might, refuſes to *do good* to us. When we judge of Perſons, not from *raſh Surmiſes*, but from *clear Evidence* and *Experience*, we may judge as we find cauſe, and, if we judge ill of them, it is not becauſe we are inclined to it, but becauſe they have deſerved it; ſo that our ill Opinion is owing purely to their Faults, and not to any want of Charity in our ſelves.

3. Some Perſons of *Paſſionate Natures* fear they have not that Charity for Enemies, which is required of all Good men, becauſe, when ſome have been moſt miſchievous to them, *their hearts are troubled*, and *they are inwardly moved as often as they ſee them*; not with any *Angry* or *Revengeful Paſſion*, which would do hurt to them; but only with a *ſad Remembrance of their own Loſſes*, which they have ſuſtained by them. Now

Now where this is really the Caſe, (and they who are concerned muſt be faithful to their own Souls in judging whether it be or no) if there be any Fault in it, it is not *want of Charity towards them*, but *want of Patience towards God*, and *Contentment in their own Condition*. They ſhew no uncharitableneſs towards them in it, ſince they have no wrathful intent to ſeek their hurt, nor have the leaſt deſire to return the Injuries which they have ſuffer'd. They are troubled at the *ſight of them*, indeed; but that is only as they put them in mind of their own Miſeries, which they have occaſion'd. They are grieved to ſee *them*, as they would be to ſee the *Picture of a Departed Friend*, whoſe Death went very near to them; *i. e.* only as it calls into their Thoughts that loſs which is very afflicting. And this *Grief*, whatever it may be with *Impatience*, is not chargeable with any *Uncharitableneſs* towards our Enemies. For it is no part of the Charity we owe them, to be inſenſible of what befalls our ſelves; ſo that they cannot complain of us for lamenting our own miſeries. Nor can they complain of us for doing it at their preſence; becauſe they being the cauſe of all, the ſight of them may well bring it to our Remem-

brance: and if we may be ſorry at all for our own unhappineſs, we may be allowed to grieve then eſpecially, when we have thoſe things before us, which are moſt apt to repreſent and ſuggeſt it to us.

So long then as they are careful ſo to *moderate* their Grief for what is loſt, (and they muſt be watchful in this point) as that it doth not make them *diſtruſt God*, nor *repine* at what he has order'd, nor ſettle into an *habitual Diſcontent*, nor is otherwiſe *ſinful* or *intemperate*; it need be no ſcruple to their minds, nor hinder them from the Holy Sacrament. They may indeavour to prevent it, both for their own *eaſe* and *ſafety*, that they may neither be *pain'd* nor *tempted* with it: and to this end it may be very adviſeable to avoid the *Preſence of the injurious Perſon*, till they have ſo well digeſted their Loſs, as that they can look on him without being troubled. But if at any time they meet, and their Hearts are ſorrowful at the ſight: ſo long as this Grief is not in it ſelf ſinful or intemperate, nor has any angry motions and expreſſions of Revenge accompanying it; they need not be put into doubts and ſcruples with it, ſince their ſtate is not diſturb'd, nor their Souls at all endanger'd by it.

4. They

4. They are afraid they have not ſuch Charity for their Enemies as they ought, becauſe *they are not ſo free with them*, nor *repoſe the ſame Truſt in them*, but carry themſelves with more *Reſerve* and at a *greater diſtance* from them, than they uſed to do before the breach betwixt them.

But ſo long as their Enemies are *Impenitent*, all this has no hurt in it: So that they ought not to be hindred from the Sacrament, or affrighted by it. For this warineſs in Converſing with our Enemies, is no more than *Chriſt* himſelf ſhew'd in Converſing with the *Jews*: who *would not walk openly among them, becauſe they ſought to kill him*, Jo. 7 1. *and* c. 11. 53, 54. It is no more than he taught his *Diſciples* to uſe, when he *ſent them forth as Sheep in the midſt of Wolves*; for then he bid them take to themſelves all the *way Wiſdom* and prudent Care *of Serpents*, Mat. 10. 16. Indeed, if any one that injures or offends us, expreſſes himſelf ſorry for it, and *ſufficiently Repents* of it; we ought, as I have ſhewn, to admit him to his former ſtate, and to treat him, now he is a *Penitent*, as *God* doth *us*, or as *Children* do their *Play-Fellows*, *i. e.* as if he had never ſinn'd, but had kept always

always innocent. But till we ſee that, we may very *lawfully*, and very *wiſely* too, withdraw from him our *particular Familiarity*, *Truſt*, or *Friendſhip*. If we find a Perſon *Diſhoneſt once*, till we ſee him a New man, we are not bound to truſt him a *ſecond* time; for that were to give *him* an opportunity of *committing*, and put *us* into the danger of *ſuffering* the *ſame* again from him. If 'tis his Temper to *fall foul* upon us in *Diſcourſe*, or to be *paſſionate* or *reproachful* upon light occaſions; till it appears that he has learned to act otherwiſe, we are not bound to uſe his Company and Acquaintance: for that were not only to throw away our own *eaſe*, but to indanger our own *Meekneſs*, *Peace*, and *other* Virtues, by *caſting our ſelves upon Temptations*; whenas we ought to be ſo far from ſeeking them our ſelves, † Mat. 6. 13. that we are † taught to *pray daily* againſt thoſe, which *Gods Providence* might allot for us. If he lays wait to *over-reach*, or is induſtrious to *vex*, or is any ways *uneaſie*, or *prejudicial* to us in his Converſation, we may lawfully carry our ſelves at a diſtance from him, till he has reformed thoſe *Vices*, or corrected thoſe

thoſe *ill Tempers* which harm or annoy us, and ſhew'd us that now with ſafety to our ſelves we may come nearer to him. This diſtance we may uſe towards any Perſons that offend againſt us, out of a *Natural Love* and *Care* for our *own ſelves*; but if they are our *Children* or *Servants*, or any ways *Subject* and *Dependant* on us, there is ſtill a more obliging Reaſon for it, and that is *their Amendment* and *Reformation* likewiſe. For when the Fault is great enough to bear it, theſe marks of our Diſpleaſure are a neceſſary part of *Diſcipline*, and altogether fit to be uſed, to make them duly ſenſible of it, and afraid ever after to repeat it. Which is ſo far from being an *unkind* part towards them, that in reality it is the *trueſt* way of *ſhewing kindneſs*, being the moſt proper courſe to amend them, and to bring them back at once to *their former ſtate of innocence*, and all expreſſions of *our Favour* too.

And thus it appears, that ſo long as we are careful to ſhew our Enemies all that *Juſtice*, *Charity*, and *Peace*, which is due to our *Neighbour at large*, and to all other Perſons; we have as much Love for them as God requires, though we *ſtill remember their Injuries*, and

and *Unkindneſſes*, or *think the worſe of their Perſons* as we have juſt cauſe, or *uſe more Reſerve*, and *keep a greater diſtance towards them* in our Carriage, and the like, than we did before they had provoked us. We ſhew all the Love which is expected, when we are not wanting to them in any Offices of *common Charity* and *Neighbourhood*: this makes us accepted with Almighty God, and ſo fits us for the *Holy Sacrament*; ſo that although we do not admit them to our *particular Eſteem* and *Friendſhip*, whilſt they have not ſufficiently evidenc'd that *Repentance* which ſhould qualifie them for it; that ought not to put us back, and hinder us from partaking in it.

As for *theſe* Hindrances then, which detain ſome good People from this *Feaſt*, *viz.* their *remembring injuries*, or *thinking the worſe of their Enemies*, or *carrying themſelves towards them at a diſtance*, or excluding them from all *particular Truſt* and *Confidence*, and the like; ſo long as they ſhew them all that Love which is due to *all* men out of *Common Charity* and *Neighbourhood*, and are ready to ſhew them *more* when their *Repentance* fits them for it; they ought not in any wiſe to put them by it. They are

no

no Breach of that Charity which God has required, and therefore do not unfit them for the Holy Sacrament; ſo that when they are all their hindrance, they need not ſtay away, but may chearfully approach to it.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of Law-Suits.

The Contents.

They are an Hindrance from the Communion, when there is ſin in them. They are not ſinful in themſelves, which is ſhewn, 1. *From the neceſſity of them.* 2. *From the Magiſtrates Office being appointed for them.* 3. *From Gods taking Legal Determinations upon himſelf, as if he were the Author of them.* 4. *From Courts erected by conſent in the Apoſtles Days, which miniſtred to them. Theſe St.* Paul *preſcribed to the* Corinthians, 1 Cor. 6. *They are the Aſſemblies mention'd* Jam. 2. 2. 5. *From our Saviours, and St.* Pauls *Practice, who, in claiming the Benefit of them, warranted and authorized them. An objection from* Mat. 5. 38, 39, 40. *conſider'd; which is ſhewn not to condemn defending our ſelves in any caſe when others implead us; nor moving Suits in all, but only in caſe of lighter Leſſes and Indignities, ſuch as our Saviour there mentions, or making them miniſter to Revenge*

in

in any others. And 1 Cor. 6. 7. answered, which makes them not a Damning sin, but only, when some Virtuous ends do not require them, a Defect and Diminution. But they are sinful, 1. When they are begun upon an unjustifiable Ground. Such they always are, 1. When they are Vindictive, not Reparative; as when we sue insolvent Persons; or others upon such Words or Actions, for which, besides costs, no Dammages that are valuable are like to be allotted us. 2. When they are for Reparation of small things, which countervail not the evil and hazard of a Suit, but ought to be a matter of Patience and Forgiveness, and so be quietly put up without recourse to it. In judging of this smallness, we must not estimate by our own Pride and Passions; but by the reality of things, and the Judgment of indifferent, humble, and dispassionate Persons. This is true, not only in case of Injuries to our own selves, but also in case of Trust, when we have the charge of others. 2. Suits are sinful when they are carried on by a sinful management: As they are, when they make us Transgress any of those Duties towards our Adversaries, which oblige us towards all Persons. To avoid all these in suing is an hard point: So we must be slow in coming to it, and very

very circumſpect when we are forced upon it. The Anſwer to this Hindrance ſumm'd up.

BEſides thoſe Particulars, which I have conſidered in the *laſt Chapter*, there is *another want of Charity*, which may ſeem of greater weight, and which is moſt commonly pleaded in Excuſe of mens abſtaining from the Holy Sacrament; and that is the point of *Law-Suits*. For this is very frequently given as a Reaſon why men dare not receive the Communion, becauſe they have a *Legal Controverſie with their Neighbours, and a Suit depending*.

Now as to *Law-Suits*, when they have *no ſin* in them, they are like all other *indifferent* things, and *need not hinder* men: but when they are *ſinful*, they are like *all other ſins*, *i. e.* they unfit us till we ſhew *Repentance*, and ought to hinder us ſo long as we continue in them. But as then they are an hindrance to a *worthy Receiving*; ſo are they equally to a *worthy Prayer*, and to all *juſt hopes of Heaven*. Whilſt we go on with them, we cannot pray to God, or think to have our ſins pardon'd, or, ſhould we be ſnatched away to Judgment in this ſtate, expect to be happy in another World. And this is a ſtate, wherein

wherein no conſiderate man will perſiſt for one moment; but when he ſees his Suit is ſo offenſive to God, and brings his Eternal welfare into ſo great hazard, he will either manage it more innocently, ſo as that there ſhall be no offence in it; or break it off without delay, and inſtantly put an end to it. And when once he has done this, or is fully purpoſed in his own mind ſo to do; he is again a Friend of God, and fit to joyn in the Holy Sacrament, as well as in Prayers, or in any other part of Worſhip.

Thus doth the *weight of this Hindrance* from the Communion, lye in the *innocence* or *unlawfulneſs of the Suit* which is depending. And therefore that Perſons *at Law* may know when they are unfit to Communicate till they have put a ſtop to it, and when they may do it notwithſtanding it; I ſhall here ſtate the caſe of *Law-Suits*, and ſhew when a *Tryal* is our *Fault*, and when 'tis *innocent*, that ſo we may know when we *need not*, and when we *ought to be hindred* by it.

In purſuit of this, I ſhall endeavour to clear up theſe *two* Particulars.

1. *A Suit at Law is not a thing unlawful in it ſelf, but may be innocent, if nothing elſe comes in to make a ſin of it.* But then,

2. *It*

2. *It is our ſin and a matter of our account, when it is either upon an unjuſtifiable Ground, or carried on by a ſinful management.*

1. I ſay, *a Suit at Law is not a thing unlawful in it ſelf, but may be innocent if nothing elſe comes in to make a ſin of it.*

It is no unlawful thing barely to diſpute a Title, or to bring an Action; it is in ſome Caſes allowed, as well as in others it is prohibited: ſo that a man may be Faultleſs that has a Suit, unleſs ſomething more comes in to make him a Tranſgreſſour in it. The offence lies not in the *Nature* of it, ſo as to be inſeparable from the *Thing*; but only in the *Cauſe*, or in the *manner of Suing*: for as St. *Paul* ſaid of the *Law of God* among the *Jews*, ſo may we of the *Laws* of our *ſeveral Countries*, *the Law is* a *good* thing *if a man uſe it lawfully*, 1 Tim. 1. 8; it is no ſin to uſe it or take the benefit of it, but only to tranſgreſs ſome other Precept, or join ſome other ſin with it when we do.

Now this may appear,

1. From *the neceſſity of it.*

2. From *the Magiſtrates Office being appointed for it.*

3. From *Gods taking a Legal Determination upon himſelf, as if he were the Author of it.*

4. From

4. From *Courts being Erected by consent in the Apoſtles Days, to miniſter to it.*

5. From *the Practice of our Bleſſed Saviour, and St.* Paul *who claimed the Benefit of it,* and thereby *plainly warranted and authorized it.*

1. It appears, I ſay, from *the neceſſity of it.* A Tryal at Law muſt needs be innocent in it ſelf when nothing elſe corrupts it, becauſe it is a thing we cannot want, and there is no living in the World without it. For take away *Law,* which ſhould ſecure *innocent mens Properties,* and bridle all *Envious, Angry, Spiteful, Covetous, Inſolent,* and *Ambitious* mens *rapacious* and *encroaching humours*: and, ſince all places are fully ſtored with theſe injurious Tempers, the Wicked being by far the greateſt numbers, the *Quiet* and *Conſcientious* muſt flee into *Woods* and *Deſarts,* or, if they ſtay to Aſſociate with others, become every where a *Prey* to their *greedy* and *uſurping Neighbours.* If there were no Laws to protect them, there were no living in this World for good men; and in effect there would be none, if it were a ſin in them to try a Title, or Right themſelves by them. For no man that had a mind to it, would be aw'd from

from doing wrong by a Law that is always to be a Sword in a Scabbard, and must never be pleaded against him, or executed upon him when he transgresses it. The use of Law then in this World is absolutely necessary to *all Society*, to *keep Peace* and *Justice* in all Converse, and to *protect* and *encourage* all such as desire to *serve God* and to be *Conscientious*. And since there is that necessity of it for Gods Service, and all Virtuous Ends; it cannot in its own Nature be a thing offensive, and unlawful to us. It cannot be it self a Sin, which God has made so absolutely necessary to keep all others out: it must needs be allowed by him, since without it his own ends of Peace and Justice cannot be attain'd; it is at least sure an *innocent*, if not a *good* thing, which gives the only protection to all Goodness, and without which there is no living for Good men in Societies, where they may do God publick Service, and draw in others, nor indeed any safe abode for them upon the Earth at all.

2. That a *Suit at Law* is not *sinful in it self*, but may sometimes be *innocent*, appears from *the Magistrates Office being appointed for it.*

One part of the *Magistrates Office* lies, indeed, in *protecting* his Subjects against all

all *Foreign Force* and *Invaſions*. But his moſt *ordinary* and *conſtant* work, is to *adminiſter Juſtice*, and *maintain Peace* among *themſelves*; which is done by *hearing Cauſes*, and *judging in all Controverſies and Arraignments*, giving Sentence on the ſide which the Law favours, and where the Right Lies. Thus is it the Magiſtrates Office to *hear* Cauſes or Suits at Law, and to *decide* them. And this work he doth not aſſume to himſelf, either *without*, or *againſt* Gods liking; but *according* to *his appointment*, and altogether *with his approbation*. For *by me*, ſays *Wiſdom*, *Kings Reign*, *and Princes Decree Juſtice*, Prov. 8. 15. And *the Powers that be*, ſays St. *Paul*, *are appointed of God*, *they are Gods Ordinance*, Rom. 13. 1, 2. And ſince God himſelf appoints them to hear our Cauſes, we may well preſume he will not look upon it as our ſin to bring them to their hearing. For God would never appoint an Ordinance to miniſter only to Mens ſins, and to put them in a way of multiplying Offences; ſo that ſince he has appointed Officers to hear it, a Suit at Law in it ſelf muſt needs be innocent, and capable to be carried on without any ſin at all.

Nay, God has not only appointed the Magiſtaates Office for it: But moreover,

3. When

3. When *a Legal Determination is given, he takes it upon himself, as if he were the Author of it*; which is ſtill a further Evidence that we do not ſin barely in ſeeking to it.

He takes a Legal Determination, I ſay, *upon himſelf, as if he were the Author of it.* In the *Jewiſh State*, *God* was their *Political Prince* and *Soveraign*, and the *Judges* among them were as much *his Deputies*, and did *repreſent his Perſon*, as now the *Judges* do the *Perſon* of their *ſeveral Princes* in all other *Nations*. And therefore *Moſes* told them when he appointed *them*, that the *Judgment was God's*, and that they gave Sentence only as his Deputies, and judged not for *themſelves*, but for the *Lord*, Deut. 1. 17.

Now, tho' *other* Nations cannot look upon God as their *Secular King*, and *State-Head* in *all* thoſe Points which the *Jews* could, for he gave them *Laws in Civil Affairs*, and iſſued out *Directions in State Exigencies*, and the like: yet as to *this* they can, that *all their Governours* are but *Subſtitutes under him*, and that he owns what is legally and juſtly Determined by them. For the *Magiſtrate* he looks upon as his *Miniſter* and *Vicegerent*, who doth all things in his Name and Stead; *the Power*, ſays St. *Paul*, *is*

the

the Minister of God, Rom. 13. 4. And since he acts as *his Servant*, he takes his judicial Determination upon himself, as if it were his own, and he were the Author of it. For this he doth plainly in *Criminal* Causes, and the Case is the same in all other *Judicial* that are not *Criminal*. When any man is wrong'd, saith he, let him not *avenge himself*, *for Vengeance is mine*, *I will repay* it; *i. e.* by the Magistrate who is my *avenger to Execute Wrath*, so that when he punishes, you may look upon it as if I had done it, *Rom.* 12. 19. and 13. 4.

And since a Legal Determination is owned by God himself as if he were the Author of it, we may be sure, whilst all things else are right, that there is no hurt barely in our seeking of it. It can be no sin to ask what God grants, for *he hears not Sinners* in their Sins, *Joh.* 9. 31; nor can it give any Offence in a controverted Case, to appeal to his own Sentence. So that since in all Legal Determinations it is God himself, who by his Ministers passes Judgment; we may be assured that we do not displease him in applying our selves thereto, when there is just cause for it.

4. That a *Suit at Law* and all *Judici-*

al Proceſs is not in it ſelf a *Sin*, appears from *Courts being Erected by conſent in the Apoſtles days, for the Management and Conduct of them.*

Now that ſuch Courts were then Erected, I ſhall ſhew from *two* places; one of St. *Paul*, wherein he *preſcribes* them; and another of St. *James*, wherein he makes *mention* of them.

1. It appears from one place in St. *Paul*, wherein he *preſcribes* them; and that is 1 *Cor.* 6. where he orders the *Corinthians* to appoint *Courts of Judgment* among themſelves, that ſo they might have no need to expoſe their Religion, by impleading one another before the *Heathen-Tribunals. Do not ye know*, ſays he, *that the Saints ſhall judge the World? And if the World ſhall be judg'd by yon, are ye unworthy to judge the ſmalleſt matters*, or † Κριτηρίων ἐλαχίστων. *unworthy of the ſmalleſt* † *Judicatures? If then ye have Judgment of things pertaining to this Life*, or *if ye have recourſe to* * *ſecular Judicatures*; go not before Unbelievers, but *ſet* ſome, yea, rather than Infidels, *thoſe that are leaſt eſteemed*, or † *ſet at nought in the Church*, ſet

* Ἐὰν κριτήρια ἔχητε βιωτικά.

† Ἐξουθενημένους.

ſet them, I ſay, *to judge*, or *in the* * *Chair of Judgment*, v. 2, 4. * Τὰτες καθίζεις.

Thus doth he adviſe them to erect among themſelves ſtanding Courts by *conſent*, when, the Power being in Heathens hands, they could not otherwiſe be ſupplied in their own Body with Seats of Judgment.

2. It appears alſo from another Place in St. *James*, wherein he makes *mention* of them. And that is *Jam.* 2. 2, 3, 4. *If there come into your Aſſembly* or † *Synagogue a man with a Gold Ring*, &c. † Συναγωγὴν.

Into your *Aſſembly*, *i. e.* your *Judicial Court*, where the reſpect of Perſons was not to be permitted.

That the word here rendered † Aſſembly or *Synagogue*, ſignifies ſometimes more particularly *Court Aſſemblies*, and *Judicial Conſiſtories*, appears from *Mat.* 10. 17. where our Saviour tells his Diſciples of being *delivered up to Conſiſtories, and ſcourged in their* † *Synagogues i. e.* in their *Judgment Halls*. And ſo alſo *Mat.* 23. 34. † Ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς.

And that it ought to ſignifie ſuch *Con-*

ſiſtories and *Court Aſſemblies*, (which were then uſed both in *Eccleſiaſtical* and *Civil* Affairs) in this place, appears both from the *thing it ſelf*, and from *ſeveral particulars* here ſpoken of *theſe Aſſemblies* which ſeem ſo to determine it.

The thing it ſelf, I ſay, *ſeems ſo to require it.* For in theſe Aſſemblies St. *James condemns all Reſpect of Perſons*, and *diſcrimination of Rich and Poor*, by giving *Honour* according to Peoples *Qualities*: which was unlawful only in *Judicatures*, but is a *Duty in Converſation* and *Common Carriage*. For it is an *Apoſtolical* Precept, to *give Honour to whom Honour is due*, Rom. 13. 7. And thoſe *Servants*, who have *believing Maſters*, are forbid to with-draw any thing of their Reſpect, preſuming upon their Spiritual Kindred, or to *Honour them the leſs*, becauſe they are become their *Brethren* in being *Believers*, 1 Tim. 6. 2. So that although in Judgment-Seats, not mens *Qualities*, but *Cauſes* only ought to be reſpected; yet in other Aſſemblies a regard may be given to their Perſons, and 'tis commendable ſo to do.

And *ſeveral Particulars here ſpoken of theſe Aſſemblies ſeem ſo to determine it.* For the *Offenders* here taxed with Reſpecting Perſons in them, are ſaid *to have a Foot-ſtool*,

ſtool, which belongs to *Chairs of State* and *Judicatures*; *to give Evil Judgment*; to *paſs Sentence againſt the poor Mans Cauſe, without deliberating on it, or debating it*; and to *tranſgreſs the Law in making a difference according to mens Qualities*, particularly *in bidding the Rich to ſit, and the poor to ſtand, which was expreſly forbid by a Canon of the* Jews *to all that ſate in Judgment*: all which ſhew that *Courts of Judicature* are the *Aſſemblies* here ſpecified.

The *Offenders* here taxed, I ſay, for *reſpecting Perſons in theſe Aſſemblies*, are ſaid to *have a Foot-ſtool*. For ſo the *Apoſtle* expreſſes himſelf, *v.* 3. *Ye have reſpect to him that wears the gay clothing, and ſay unto him, ſit thou here in a good Place; and ſay to the Poor, ſtand thou there, or ſit here under my Footſtool.* And this is a probable intimation of their *Dignity* and *Authority* in the place where they ſate; for *Foot-ſtools* ordinarily are Appendages only of the *Chairs of Great Perſons*, who have Power and Superiority over others, as of *Princes* on their *Thrones*, and *Judges* upon *Tribunals*.

They are ſaid *to give Evil Judgment*, *i. e.* to paſs Sentence on the wrong ſide, as he is like to do who tries not *Things* but *Perſons*, and determines from *By-reſpects*,

not from the *merits of the Cauſe* which is to be decided. By this *reſpect of Perſons*, ſays he, *ye are become Judges of Evil Thoughts*, *i. e.* you give Evil and Perverſe Judgments, *v.* 4.

They are ſaid to *paſs Sentence on the Poor mans Cauſe*, *without deliberating on it, or debating it. Te ſay to the Rich*, ſaith he, *ſit thou here, and to the Poor ſtand thou* at a diſtance *there*: † *and ye are not doubtful* or *debate his Cauſe in* or * among *your ſelves, but are Judges of evil Thoughts*, or give perverſe Judgments; for ſo the words are moſt naturally rendred, and not, as we do, *are ye not partial in your ſelves, and Judges of Evil Thoughts?* v. 3, 4. And this ſhews plainly that their *reſpect of Perſons* was expreſſed in *Judicial Proceſs*, in giving *raſh Sentence* in favour of

† *So the* Greek *is literally to be rendered. The words are* καὶ ὐ διεκρίθητε ἐν ἑαυτοῖς, and ye have not diſputedit among your ſelves, *not*, are ye not partial in yourſelves? *by way of Interrogation, as we tranſlate it. For* ὐ *is wont to ask a queſtion, only when it is put* firſt, *not when it has another word before it, as* καὶ *is here. And* διεκρίθητε *in the Paſſive ſignifies not* ye have made a difference, *or* actual partiality, *which is expreſſed by the* Active διακρίνειν *but* ye have not been in doubt *or* diſpute *about it, which is a ſignification that ordinarily agrees to it. For ſo 'tis rendred* Mat. 21. 21. Mar. 11. 23. Rom. 4. 20. Jam. 1. 6. *and in other places.*

* Ἐν ἑαυτοῖς. the

the *Rich*, without ever ſtaying to *hear the Plea*, or *weigh the Reaſons* of the *Poors Cauſe*.

They are ſaid *to tranſgreſs the Law in this regarding Perſons*, and treating them differently according to the difference of their outward State and Condition; when in this different carriage towards *Rich* and *Poor*, *ye have reſpect of Perſons*, ſays he, *ye commit ſin, and are convinced of the Law*, which plainly forbids ſuch practice, *as Tranſgreſſours*, v. 3. 9. And this ſeems clearly to reſtrain it to their *Court-Aſſemblies*. For in *Judgment* there is a Law forbidding all reſpect of Perſons, *Ye ſhall not reſpect Perſons in Judgment, but you ſhall hear the ſmall as well as the great*, Deut. 1. 17. and Levit. 19. 15. But there is no Law that forbids it, yea, rather, ſince St. *Paul* injoins us to *give Honour* where *Honour is due*, and directs *Servants* to pay never the *leſs*, but rather *more Reverence to their Maſters, becauſe they are Believers*, and would not have †*Confuſion* introduced, but *Order kept* in *the Church* as well as in *other* places; there may ſeem enough, not only to *warrant*, but to *recommend* it in *all other* Caſes. Beſides, what is ſtill a further Evidence of this point, they are ſaid particularly to tranſ-

† 1 Cor. 14. 33.

greſs the Law in bidding *the Rich to ſit*, and *the Poor to ſtand*, v. 3, 9; which, as a † great man obſerves, was a thing expreſly forbid by a *Canon* of the *Jews* to all that ſate in Judgment. For that required in all *Suits* and *Judicial Tryals* betwixt *Rich* and *Poor*, that either *both ſhould ſtand*, or *both ſhould ſit*; which is a thing, as he adds, that the *Jews* obſerve at this day in hearing Cauſes; for then, if one preſuming upon his quality *take a Seat*, the *Judge* preſently ſays to the other, *ſit thou down alſo.*

† *Dr.* Ham. Annot. *in* loc.

And thus I think it appears, that the *Aſſemblies*, which in this intricate place St. *James* mentions, are *Court-Aſſemblies* and Judicial Conſiſtories; both becauſe *the Nature of the thing ſeems to require it*, ſince in them he forbids all reſpect of Perſons, which elſewhere is not prohibited; and alſo becauſe *ſeveral particulars here ſpoken of them ſeem ſo to determine it.* For they are ſaid to be *ſuch Aſſemblies*, wherein *is a Foot-ſtool*, the uſual Appendant to *Chairs of State* and *Seats of Judgment*; wherein *men were Judges of Evil Thoughts*, i. e. *judged wrong*, and *gave perverſe Sentence*; wherein *they Condemned the Poor mans Cauſe without deliberating on it, and debating it*; wherein to *reſpect Perſons*,

Perſons, was *againſt a plain Law forbidding it*, as we find there is a very expreſs one in *Judicial Proceedings*, but none at all, nay, rather the contrary in all *other Caſes*; and, laſtly, ſuch wherein to *bid a Rich man ſit, and a Poor man ſtand, was a tranſgreſſion of a Precept*, as in *Court Aſſemblies* it plainly is, being againſt an *expreſs Canon of the Jews in Judgment*. By all which I ſuppoſe it may appear, that *Judicial Conſiſtories* are the *Aſſemblies* here intended.

Thus were Judicatures *preſcribed*, and *ordinarily uſed* in the Apoſtles Days. St. *Paul* appoints the *Corinthians* to erect them; and St. *James* makes mention of them as of an ordinary thing among them; and that too without paſſing any mark of diſlike upon the Courts themſelves, when he blames that partiality and reſpect of Perſons which they ſhewed in them. Theſe *Judicatures*, indeed, were erected by their *own conſent* among themſelves; and were not impoſed on them by *Power* and *Authority*, as other *Legal Tribunals* are: but they ſerv'd for the ſame end of *hearing Cauſes*, and *paſſing ſuch Sentence as ſhould take effect* and *put an end to Controverſies*, as other *Judgment-Seats*; ſo that the ſame thing was done by them in ſuing in *their* Courts,

which is done by us in *ours*. In our *Judgment-Halls*, 'tis true, where things are managed by *Advocates*, that oftentimes ſeek *Conqueſt* and not *Juſtice*, and ranſack all Reſerves of Law to ſupport, as long as *Craft* can do it, an unrighteous Cauſe; there is more room for ill Arts, which bring more ſin into our *Pleadings*. But that is not a Fault inſeparable from *Suits*, but is the ſin of *Managers*; it lies not *naturally upon the thing*, but only upon the *Contingent circumſtances* and *manner of doing*; ſo that if we are careful to keep it free from them, a Suit in it ſelf may ſtill be innocent, and carried on as lawfully in our Courts, as it was in thoſe of the Apoſtles Days.

And as this Lawfulneſs of Judicial Proceſs appears from theſe *Legal Courts* erected in the *Apoſtles* Days to *miniſter to it*: ſo doth it yet further,

5. From *the Practice of our Bleſſed Saviour, and St.* Paul, *who claimed the benefit of it, and thereby plainly warranted and authorized it.*

Our *Bleſſed Lord himſelf*, I ſay, *claimed the Benefit of it*. For when the Officer in the *High-Prieſts* preſence *ſtruck him with the Palm of his Hand*, he openly complains of the illegality of the Act, and

and expoſtulates before him for a redreſs of it. *If I have ſpoken Evil*, ſays he, teſtify againſt me, and *bear witneſs of the Evil: but if well, why ſmiteſt thou me?* Joh. 18. 22, 23.

And after him St. *Paul* was not afraid to plead his own Cauſe, and ſerve himſelf of Law, when others went about to uſe him with Violence contrary to it. For when the Chief Captain ordered him to be *ſcourged uncondemned*, he pleads the *Legal Priviledge* of a *Roman*, who ought not to be ſo treated, *Act.* 22. 24, 25. And when the *Magiſtrates* of *Philippi*, contrary to all Law and Priviledge, had *ſcourged him* and *Silas*, without any hearing of their Cauſe; he threatens them for it, and would not put it up, unleſs in Compenſation they would *come themſelves* in Perſon to *releaſe them out of Priſon*, and do them Honour before all the Multitude: *Act.* 16. 36, 37, 38, 39. Nay, he uſes all *wiſe Arts of Law* to maintain a *Righteous Cauſe*, and when he was not like to have *Juſtice* done him in one *Court*, *proteſts* againſt *it*, and claims the Benefit of *appeal* to *another*. For *when* Feſtus *willing to do the* Jews *a Pleaſure*, would have had him *go up* to be *judg'd before him at* Jeruſalem, *in the way* whereto the *Jews deſign'd to murder him*; he anſwered,

ſwered, *I ſtand at* Cæſars *Judgment-Seat, where I ought to be judged; if I have committed any thing worthy of Death, I refuſe not to die; but if there be none of theſe things whereof theſe accuſe me, as thou very well knoweſt*, the Law of the Empire is my Protection, and *no Man may deliver me unto them, I appeal unto* Cæſar, Acts 25. 3, 9, 10, 11.

And thus from all theſe Conſiderations it appears, that a *Suit at Law* is not a thing unalterably evil, and *unlawful in it ſelf*; but may very innocently be carried on, if no Sin mixes with it to turn it into a Tranſgreſſion. It is a thing which God has allowed when we have *juſt cauſe* for it, and are guilty of *no Vice* in the *Courſe* and *Conduct* of it. For *he himſelf has put us into a neceſſity of it*, and *has appointed the Magiſtrates Office for it*, and *takes upon himſelf the juſt Judgment which is given in it*; and when Chriſtians became a diſtinct Body, *Courts were ſet up by the Order of the Apoſtles themſelves to Miniſter to it*; and, as it fell in their way, our *Bleſſed Lord*, and St. *Paul too have ſerv'd their own turns by it*: By all which 'tis plain that a courſe of Law may ſometimes innocently be uſed, ſince otherwiſe *God* and theſe *Good Men*, could never have been thus concerned about it.

But

But againſt all this ſome may urge *two* places, which ſeem to take away all Suits among Chriſtians, and to forbid all legal Defence, by requiring a patient Sufferance of all Loſſes and Indignities which ſhould occaſion them. *One* is, *Mat.* 5. 39. in point of *Indignities*; the *other* is, *Mat.* 5. 40. and 1 *Cor.* 6. 7. in point of *Loſſes* and *ſpoil of Goods*: And if both theſe muſt be ſuffered with *Patience*, without any Legal Defence or Righting of our ſelves; what is there left to be matter of Civil Cauſes for us to Sue and Contend for?

Theſe Pleas ſeem fair, and therefore it is fit they ſhould have an Anſwer.

One Place ſeems to forbid all *Suits* and *Legal Righting of our ſelves*, in caſe of *Affronts* and *Indignities*; and that is, *Mat.* 5. 38, 39. *Ye have heard*, ſays our Saviour, *that it hath been ſaid* in the Law of *Moſes*, *an Eye for an Eye, and a Tooth for a Tooth*: i. e. When any one had offered theſe Violences to them, they were allowed by judicial Proceſs (this Law of Retaliation being directed to the Judges, *Exod.* 21. 23, 24.) to inflict the very ſame on them again. *But* in oppoſition to this, *I ſay unto you, reſiſt not Evil*, or the Evil † Man, not only forcibly by Private Violence,

† Τῷ πονηρῷ.

but

but also legally by publick proceſs, for ſo the *word rendred *Reſiſt* † ſometimes ſignifies, and its oppoſition to theſe Legal Retaliations among the *Jews* here imports. *But whoſoever ſhall ſmite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other.* And ſo again in caſe of *Loſſes and ſpoil of Goods, Man will Sue thee at the Law, and take away thy Coat* or † inner Garment; rather than contend with him for that, hazard a further Loſs, and *let him take thy* † *Cloak* or upper Garment *alſo*. Conformable whereto the Apoſtle tells the *Corinthians*, that they *are utterly in a fault, in not ſuffering themſelves to be Defrauded*, but ſeeking Remedy by a Suit or *going to* Law at all, 1 *Cor* 6. 7.

* Ἀνθιστῆναι.

† *a*, Jer. 49. 19. who will appoint me the time, *or, as it is rendred in the Margin*, convent me to plead; *which the* 70 *expreſs by* Τίς ἀντιστήσεταί μοι: *And ſo again*, Chap. 50. 44.

ver. 40. *If any*

† Χιτῶνα.

† Ἱμάτιον.

Now in Anſwer to theſe places, I obſerve,

1. That they *are not meant literally and abſolutely, of turning our Cheek to all Smiters, or yielding our Goods to all ravenous Encroachers*: Yea, that they do not forbid us

us at any time to ſerve our ſelves of Law, when others implead us; nor at all times to ſeek unto Magiſtrates, and implead others.

2. That *they are meant proverbially, and only forbid moving Suits in lighter* Loſſes and Indignities, ſuch as our Lord there mentions, or *making the Law the Miniſter of Revenge in any others.*

1. I ſay, *they are not meant Literally and abſolutely, of turning the Cheek to all Smiters, or yielding our Goods to all ravenous Incroachers; nor forbid us at any time to ſerve our ſelves of Law, when we are brought before Tribunals.* For this our *Bleſſed Lord* himſelf did, as we have ſeen, when the *Officer ſtruck him before the High-Prieſt*; he offers not himſelf for another blow, but argues againſt the illegality of what he had already received, *Joh.* 18. 22, 23. And this St. *Paul* did, when the *Chief Captain* would have ſcourged him uncondemned; he pleads the priviledge of a *Roman*, which ought to ſecure him from being ſo hardly treated, *Acts* 22. 25. And this he did again, when *Feſtus* would have ſent him to *Jeruſalem* to be *Tryed*; he *appeals to Ceſar*, and claims the Benefit of *his Judgment-Seat where he ought to be judged*, *Acts* 25. 9, 10, 11. They did not invite freſh injuries, by laying themſelves open to them;

them; but ſtood upon their own Defence, and Legally withſtood them. So that theſe Precepts are not to be taken in the Literal Compaſs, (in which ſence St. *Paul*, yea, and *Chriſt* himſelf too, would have been Tranſgreſſors,) nor ſo as to forbid us at any time to ſerve our ſelves of Law when we are brought before Tribunals: ſince St. *Paul*, who very well underſtood them, nay, our Bleſſed *Lord*, who to the height fulfilled them, have *taught* and *authoriz'd* us by their Example ſo to do.

Nay, they *do not forbid us in all Caſes to bring others before Magiſtrates, and ſeek unto Judicatories to Right our ſelves.* For St. *Paul* did ſomething towards this in his Conteſt with the *Philippian Magiſtrates*; where, though he was an Offender againſt the Laws, yet in regard they had treated him illegally, in ſcourging *him* and *Silas* uncondemned, againſt the Priviledge of *Romans*; he terrifies them with it, and would not put it up, till they Compounded with him upon his own Terms, and brought him honourably out of Priſon in the Eyes of all the Citizens, *Acts* 16. 36,37, 38,39. Beſides, as I have already ſhewn, that this is ſometimes lawful among Chriſtians, is evident from the *Law-Courts* in the *Apoſtles*

ſtles Days, which were preſcribed by the Apoſtles themſelves for this very purpoſe. It is clear from the *neceſſity* of it, ſince there is no living in this World for honeſt and Conſcientious Men without it: From *Gods* having *appointed an Officer* on purpoſe, the *Magiſtrate* I mean, to take care of it; and from his taking a *juſt Law-Determination* upon himſelf, as if he were the *Author* of it: So that *ſome ſeeking unto Courts*, and judicial endeavors to Right our ſelves, are ſtill *innocent*; and therefore *all* cannot be here *prohibited.*

As for theſe Places then, they are not meant *Literally* and *Abſolutely* of *turning our Cheek to all Smiters*, or of *yielding our Goods to all ravenous Encroachers*: They do not forbid us at *any time* to ſerve our ſelves of Law when others *unjuſtly implead us*; nor at *all times* to *ſeek unto Magiſtrates*, and *implead others.*

But,

2. They *are meant Proverbially, and only forbid MOVING Suits in Lighter Loſſes and Indignities, ſuch as our Lord there mentions; or making Law the Miniſter of Revenge in any others.*

They *require Patience*, and *forbid MOVING Suits in lighter Loſſes and Indignities.* To *turn the Cheek to a Smiter*, is a *Proverbial*

Proverbial Speech, which denotes our *calm endurance* and *patient bearing of injuries.* And ſo the Afflicted Mans Patient carriage is expreſſed, *Lam.* 3.—*he giveth his Cheek to him that ſmiteth him*, v. 30. And to let him that *Sues for the Coat*, i. e. the † Shirt or inner Garment, *take the Cloak alſo*, is a *Proverbial* Phraſe too, (for in the truth of the Letter, a Shirt is no likely matter of a Law-Suit,) and ſignifies an *unconteſting ſufferance of ſuch ſmall Loſſes*, tho that may expoſe us to bear ſome *others*, and thoſe more *weighty* ones. So that when our Saviour bids us *give the other Cheek to the Smiter*, and the *upper Garment to him that has taken away the inner*, i.e. to venture the inviting him to a *ſecond* injury by his ſucceſs, rather than to ingage in variance: His meaning is, that in *theſe*, or ſuch other *light* injuries, which either leave *no permanent effect*, or only ſuch as may be born without any *great Prejudice*; we ſhould exerciſe our *Patience*, and not go to Law, either to *recompenſe* the *paſt*, or to *prevent future* ſufferings. And therefore if in theſe *ſmaller matters* we enter Actions and implead others, that indeed is our *Sin*; ſince here he enjoyns us *Charitably* and *Patiently* to bear, and not to *Sue* for them.

† χιτῶνα.

And

And as they forbid all Suits in *theſe*, ſo do they all *Malice*, and *making Law the inſtrument of Revenge in any others. Ye have heard*, ſaith our Saviour, *that it hath been ſaid an Eye for an Eye, and a Tooth for a Tooth*: i. e. they were allowed in courſe of Law to return ill who had ſuffered it, when as in theſe inſtances mentioned, they had no other benefit by it, but only the pleaſure of ſeeing him ſmart who had occaſioned it; which is properly Revenging it, for to *Revenge* an injury is in *hatred to return it*. *But* in oppoſition to this, *I ſay unto you*, (ſo that Revenge being the thing there allowed, it muſt in the oppoſition be here prohibited) *reſiſt not evil*, i. e. in any kind of Reſiſtance, which is Revenging it as they might: *But whoſoever ſhall ſmite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other*, &c. i. e. Be readier to ſuffer another injury, than ſpitefully to commence a Suit, or in any ſort to Revenge what is received already; *v.* 38, 39, 40.

As for this place in St. *Matthew* then, it forbids us not to *defend our ſelves* by Law in *any* caſe, nor in *all* to *bring an Action* and *implead others*: But it only forbids Suits in *lighter Loſſes* and *Indignities*, ſuch as our Lord there mentions, and making the Law the *inſtrument of Revenge in weightier matters*. But

But even in those Cases, where it is no *Sin* to use Law, and our Saviour Christ has not forbid it: Yet if it is only *our own concern* and no *point of Trust*, it is a more *noble thing*, and a *greater pitch of Christian Perfection*, to *abstain from it*.

When we are in *trust for others*, indeed this is not to be advised; for we must not be *Generous in Charities* at *their cost*, nor affect heights in Patience when they are to pay for it: lest whilst we aim at a great pitch of *Passive Virtues*, and *Love towards Offenders*, we be found wanting in *Justice* and *Faithfulness towards our own Charge*. And this is to be extended not only towards *Strangers*, who are *voluntarily* committed to us; but also in due measure, to our own *Children* and *Families*, for whom we ought to † *provide convenient support*, and whom *God* and *Nature* have *intrusted* to us.

† 2 *Cor.* 12. 14.

But when the Loss is only to *our selves*, and doth not any way *Defraud others* of what they might in *Reason claim* from us, or, as in the Case of *Pious* or *Charitable* Works, of what *we had allotted* them in our *own Designs*: tho without Sin we might Sue for it, yet doth it shew more of that *Charity which* † *seeks not her own*, and is

† 1 *Cor.* 13. 5.

a nobler attainment in a Christian, Patiently to sit down under it; as *Athenagoras* tells us the Christians in his time usually did, who † when their Goods were violently seized would not draw the injurious Persons into Judgment. And this St. *Paul* affirms of it, 1 *Cor.* 6. *There is utterly* or † *altogether a fault* or a * *defect among you, because ye go to Law* at all *one with another. Why do ye not* rather *take wrong? Why do you not rather suffer your selves to be defrauded?* v. 7. He doth not condemn it as a *Sin*; but only as a *defect*, or thing that *lessened* them. Their Suing *before unbelievers*, he tells them was a sinful Course; because as their Case stood, who impleaded *each others*, and that too for *injuries*, it was a Scandal to their Enemies, and exposed the Christian Cause, *v.* 1. 6. But as for their *bare going to Law* it self, it was not so. For he tacitely intimates they might do it before the *Saints*——*Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to Law before the unjust*, saith he, *and not before the Saints*, much rather? *v.* 1. Nay he orders them that they should do it,

† *Their way is*, Παιόμενοι μὴ ἀντιτύπτειν, καὶ ἁρπαζόμενοι μὴ δικάζεσθαι. Athen. Legat. *p.* 12.

† Ὅλως.

* Ἥττημα.

¶ and

and erect Judicatures among themſelves for that intent. Go not before Infidels, ſays he, but *ſet thoſe who are leaſt eſteemed among your ſelves to Judge*, or *ſet them in the Seat*, or † *Chair of judgment*, v. 4. 2, 3. This was ordinarily done in other places, where they *had Judicial Aſſemblies*, as I have ſhewn from *Jam.* 2. 2. Yea, and where they *had not*, but muſt implead before a *Gentile Judgment-Seat*, when the Scandal that now accompanied their Caſe was not incurr'd, he himſelf had given Countenance to it, and *threatned Legally to Right himſelf* before the *Heathen Magiſtrate*, Acts 6. 37, 38, 39. But altho their Suits at Law in *weightier* Caſes were no *Sin*, yet he tells them they were their *Leſſening* and *Diminution*: And that albeit they might with a ſafe Conſcience uſe them, yet would it ſhew more *Contempt of Earthly Things* and *Mortified Paſſions*, more *Generous Charity*, and *Stronger Patience*, and a *greater height of Chriſtian Perfection*, to retain. *It is*, ſays he, *altogether* not a † *Sin*, but a * *Leſſening* and Diminution to you, that you *go to Law one with another*. And becauſe there is only a *Defect*, but no *Tranſgreſſion* in it; he doth not

† Καθίζετε.

† Παράπτωμα. * Ἧττημα.

not *absolutely condemn*, but only *comparatively dissuade* from it. *Why do ye not* rather *take wrong? Why do you not rather suffer your selves to be defrauded?* 1 Cor. 6. 7.

As for these places then, which seem to forbid Suits either on *Losses* or *Indignities*, they do not forbid them *absolutely*, and in *all* Cases. They only forbid us to fly to them in *smaller* matters, such as our Saviour mentions; or to make them a *means of Revenge* in *Great* ones; or say of Suits in General, where a *publick* end or some *other Virtue* doth not require them, that they are, although not our *sin*, yet our *Defect* and *Diminution*: So that whensoever they are *sued* at Law, the *best* men may *serve themselves* of it; and when they are *greatly injured*, though 'twere *better* to let it alone, yet may they *safely seek to it*, and, without any offence to God or wrong to a good Conscience, *implead others* still.

And thus it appears that Suits at Law are not *sinful in themselves*, but may lawfully be used, if there is no unlawfulness in the *Ground*, and *way of management*. The thing it self has no sin in it, and so may be innocent if we take care that no other sin adhere to it. So that barely to try a Title is no matter of any

mans account, nor has any offence at all in it.

But although Suits at Law are not thus unlawful in themſelves, but may ſometimes be innocent; yet as I ſaid,

2. They *are our ſin and a matter of our account, when they are either enter'd upon an unjuſtifiable Ground, or are carried on by a ſinful Management.*

1. I ſay *Suits at Law are our ſin*, and *a matter of our account, when they are begun upon an unjuſtifiable Ground.*

It is not every cauſe that uſually *begets* it, which can *warrant* before God, and *Juſtify a Law-Suit.* For ſometimes men are led on to it only by *Revenge*, when they have no laſting Dammage to be repaired, but ſeek only their Brothers ſmart, and to be even with him who offered it: and then the Suit muſt needs be unlawful, having a *ſin* at the bottom of it. And at other times, when there is a *real Dammage*, yet is it ſo *trivial* as that the making of it up will not countervail the Evils and Temptations of a Suit; and then it will be ſinful ſtill, as wanting a Ground of ſo much weight, as can bear the burden of it. For a Tryal at Law, beſides its being a *coſtly* and *painful* thing, is alſo a very *perillous State*, and a *dangerous Temptation.* It will be ſure to put *him*

him we ſue to much *trouble* and *pains* in *Collecting* and *Examining Evidences*, *preparing Witneſſes*, *informing Advocates*, and *attending Courts*, which is toyl in it ſelf, and an hindrance to better buſineſs: and in the whole Courſe and Conduct of it, it will put him to *conſtant Charges* and *Expence*. And it will be a *State of great Temptation*, both to *him* and to *our ſelves*, inſnaring us, unleſs we are very circumſpect to prevent it, into *covetous Wiſhes*, or *delays of Juſtice*, or *vexatious Arts*, or *uncharitable Surmizes*, and *revengeful Thoughts*, or *deceitful Suggeſtions* and *Falſifications*, *Hypocritically diſguiſing* the *weakneſs* of our *own* Cauſe, or *unreaſonably aggravating* thoſe of *our Adverſaries* to our own profit and his prejudice, and the like. Theſe ſins are ever before men whilſt a Suit is depending, they have conſtant opportunities for them, and are perpetually provoked into them; and it muſt be a *great Conduct*, as well as a *great Care* that muſt preſerve them from being ingaged in them. And ſince there is ſo *much Toil attending it*, ſo *great Charge occaſioned by it*, and ſo *many Temptations* and *great Dangers*, both to our *own Souls* and our *Brothers*, *laid in the way* of it: it muſt not be a *light* thing, but a *weighty* Cauſe indeed, which can over-balance

all these Considerations, and justly draw us to commence it.

But in this point to be more Particular. Suits are *unlawfully* entred when they are begun, either,

1. *For Revenge, and not for Reparation of Damages.*

Or,

2. When for *Reparation* only of *small things, which cannot countervail the evil and hazard of a Suit, but ought to exercise our Patience and Forgiveness*, and so *be put up without Recourse to it.*

1st. I say, Suits are *unlawfully entred*, when they are *Vindictive* not *Reparative*, and are *begun only for Revenge, not for Repair of Damages.* And this they always are, when they are commenced either against *insolvent Persons*; or *upon such words and actions against others, for which*, besides *Costs, no Damages* that are *valuable are like to be allowed us.*

They are not *Reparative*, but *Vindictive*, when they are commenced against *insolvent Persons.* When we sue a *poor* man, who cannot pay what he owes, or recompence what he has wrongfully done to us, it is not that our own Sore may be heal'd, but only that his Smart may be wrought by it. For the Law doth not make him Coin Money that has it not, but only forces

forces him to pay it, who has it, but will not part with it. To put a *Beggar* in Prison, and run him out at Law to the utmost, is not the way to put Money in his Pocket; so that when we have to do with such, it is only Revenge upon him, and not the Compensation of our own Loss, which can be sought by it. If we go to right our selves by Law then upon an insolvent man, we go only to return the hurt which he has done, and to be even with him. And this is a great instance of an *hard Heart*, and a *spiteful Spirit*; and is quite contrary to that *Brotherly-kindness*, *Compassion*, and *Forgiveness*, which, how *unworthy* soever *he* may be of it, yet so long as the *misery* of *his case* requires it, God has injoyn'd us to use towards him. It is exactly to deal with *him*, as the *wicked man* did with his *insolvent Brother* in the *Parable*, which provoked God to return the same Rigour upon his own head again. For when *he ought his Lord ten thousand Talents*, *he freely forgave him* that great *Debt*, because he was *not able to pay it*: But when his *Fellow-Servant*, *who ought him* only *an hundred Pence*, could not tender down that small summ when he demanded it, he shew'd nothing of that Compassion towards this poor man which God had shewn to him,

but *laid hands on him*, and *caſt him into Priſon till payment* ſhould be made. But when *the Fellow-Servants told* this *to their Lord*, he reſolves to deal with him in his own way, and ſtrictly *exacts* that Debt, which otherwiſe he intended freely to have *acquitted*, *delivering him*, as he had done *his Brother*, *to the Tormentors*, till all ſhould be diſcharged. And *ſo likewiſe ſhall my Heavenly Father do to you*, ſays our Saviour, *if ye from your Hearts forgive not every one his Brother their Treſpaſſes*, Mat. 18. v. 24. to c. 19.

But if they are commenced againſt *reſponſible* Perſons, they are not *Reparative* but *Vindictive* ſtill, if they are *upon ſuch Words or Actions*, *for which*, beſides *Coſts*, no *Damages* that are *valuable are like to be allowed us*. A great number of Suits are for *abuſive Words*, or a *Box on the Ear*, or ſome other *trivial* matters, which leave no *Permanent ill effects*, but if our *Paſſions* may be with-held from eſtimating them, paſs off without making us the *worſe*, or doing us *any Prejudice*. And in all theſe, ſince there is no Damage ſticks to us, there is no *need* of any Reparations: ſo that if we begin Suits, it is not to *indemniſe our ſelves*, but to be *vexatious* and *afflict others who have afflicted us*, wherein conſiſts the very Nature of *Revenge*.

And

And this is always *unlawful*, and most expresly forbidden to all us *Christians*. To the *Jews*, indeed, it was allowed in the *Old Testament*: For they were permitted to *return ill for ill*, and to demand *an Eye for an Eye*, and *a Tooth for a Tooth*, when thereby their own lost Member was not restored, but only their Adversaries sent after it, and, bating the Pleasure of Revenge, they reaped no other Benefit by it, *Mat.* 5. 38. But this is most strictly forbidden to all us *Christians* in the *New*. For we are taught *to recompence to no man Evil for Evil*, *but to overcome Evil with Good*, Rom. 12. 17, 20, 21: to *forgive those that Trespass against us*, *i. e.* not to return their injurious, or hard usage, as ever we expect *forgiveness of our own Trespasses* at *Gods hands*, Mat. 6. 12, 14, 15. And particularly in opposition to this *going to Law for Revenge*, our Saviour forbids us *Judicially* to *resist the Evil man*, as has been shewn, *i. e.* in course of Law to return the Evil on him, as by Virtue of that Rule *An Eye for an Eye*, &c. the *Jews* did; but in stead of that, by the Phrase of *turning one Cheek to him who has struck the other*, requires that we patiently submit and sit down under it, *Mat.* 5. 38, 39, 40.

This then is the *first* thing which

God requires to the Lawfulneſs of all Judicial Tryals; they muſt never be *Vindictive*, but *Reparative*, and we muſt not Sue another in order to *his Smart* and *Prejudice*, but only to *heal* or *ſecure our own ſelves*, either by *holding* the *Goods* which he *claims*, or *repairing the Loſs*, which he has *occaſioned* us.

2. Suits for *Reparation of Loſſes* are unlawful, when the Reparations are only of *ſmall things which cannot countervail the evil and hazard of a Suit*, but ought to exerciſe our *Patience* and *Forgiveneſs*, and ſo be quietly put up without Recourſe to it.

In the Courſe of *ſecular Wiſdom*, indeed, which looks only to ſecure the Concerns of *this World*, when men are *Rich* or *Potent*, and have Wealth or Intereſt enough to go through with it, the *ſmalleſt Affronts* or *infringement of their juſt Power* and *Priviledge*, are often-times eſteemed a ſufficient occaſion of a *Law-Suit*. For thereby they think they *ſtop* the *firſt Breach* in their *own Right*, which if it be ſuffered to be once made, as it is in the Breach of a *Water-Bank*, or a *fortified Wall*, 'tis after that a much eaſier thing to widen it; they *check* an *incroaching humour* in the bud, before it has got Heart or Ground enough to make a greater Conteſt;

Conteſt; and they ſhew the World they are not of a *yielding Temper* that will be *wrong'd* or *baffled*, and thereby ſtrike an awe, which will keep all others from attempting them, and purchaſe their own quiet. Upon theſe, or ſuch like *ſecular Maxims*, when nothing but the intereſt of this World guides them, they many times conclude the ſleighteſt wrongs are not to be put up, and therefore, when in any trivial thing their Right is invaded, betake themſelves to courſe of Law for Maintenance and Vindication of it.

But in *Religion* the Caſe is altered. For that ſeeks not only what is fit to *ſecure our ſelves*, and maintain our *worldly Rights*; but what is fit to maintain an *Univerſal innocence*, and to ſhew *Charity* towards *others*. Its main work lies in leſſening the Love of this World, and making us eaſie to part with any injoyment of this Life, when it is inconſiſtent with any Duty, and indangers our Paſſage to a better. And therefore although *ſecular wiſdom* would perhaps ſometimes adviſe us, yet will *true Religion* altogether forbid us to go to *Law* for *trivial Loſſes*. For a Suit at Law, as I have noted, will put our *Adverſary* to great *Coſt* and *Pains*; and ſince in Chriſtianity he is our *Neighbour* and our *Brother*, this we

ought not to do for little things, whereby we ſhall not gain near ſo much as he loſes, for this is not † Mat.22.39. according to the † Commandment, *to Love him as our ſelves.* Nay, it will be a *great ſnare*, both to *his* Virtue and *ours*; for although it be no ſtate of *direct ſin*, yet is it a ſtate of very *dangerous Temptation*, there being ſo many ways to offend whilſt a Suit is carrying on, and it being ſo very hard to avoid them without great Conduct and Circumſpection. And this alſo we *ought* not lightly to caſt, either in the way of our *own* Souls, or of our *Brothers*; yea, we *ſhall* not do it, if we have any of that *tender Love* and *Care for Souls* which *Chriſt* has ſhew'd, and which he requires *us* to ſhew, when, upon a proſpect of ſaving them, he commands us, not only to *bear a Reproach*, or to *part with our Subſtance*; but even *to lay down our own Lives for others*, 1 Joh.3.16.

Thus, when the Damages to be repaired are but of *ſmall* account, and the trouble and charges of the Suit will take much more from him, than we are like to get by it: out of our *tender care* of *all Perſons*, whom God commands us to *Love as we do our ſelves*; and out of our *Love* to *each others Souls*, and deſire to keep, both

both *our ſelves* and *them* from *dangerous Temptations*, which would rob us of our *Innocence*, a thing that ought not to be hazarded for *trifling* Regards; we ought *patiently to bear* the Loſs, and not ſeek out by Law to redreſs it. And this, as I have intimated, is what our Saviour expreſly commanded *Mat.* 5. *If one ſmite thee on thy right Cheek*, which is a tolerable affront, *turn to him the other alſo*, or expoſe thy ſelf to be ſmitten again, rather than judicially reſiſt it. *And if any man ſue thee at the Law, to take away thy Coat*, or inner Garment, a thing that may eaſily be ſpared, hazard an higher Loſs, and *let him take thy Cloak alſo*, rather than ſue to regain it. *v.* 38, 39, 40. So that rather than ſue to recover little matters, and enter Actions for ſmall Reparations, we muſt be content to want them, and ſit down without any Repairs at all.

And in rating when things are thus *little* and *frivolous*, we muſt not judge by our own *Pride* and *Paſſions*, which count nothing little, but aggrandize every affront or injury that is done to our own ſelves: but by the *reality of things*, and according as we *our ſelves* ſhould judge were we *humble* and *diſpaſſionate*, or as they would be judg'd of by *other Holy*

and *Indifferent Perſons*. Our own *Pride*, and the *Opinions of the World* would whiſper to us, that *every Treſpaſs againſt us* is *intolerable*, and *deſerves a Proceſs*; every *imputation of a Lye*, a *Stab*; and every *actionable Affront*, a *Suit* at leaſt, if not a *Challenge*. But *Pride*, and *Paſſion*, and the *Opinions of the World*, muſt not be our Councellors: for we *renounced* them at our *Baptiſm*, when we were firſt made Chriſtians; and if we would pleaſe God, they muſt not ſway, but ought daily to be *mortified* and *ſubdued* in us. And ſince they are ſo much our *Sin*, and ſo directly againſt our *Baptiſmal Vow* and *Profeſſion*: it will be no excuſe for going to Law on *little Loſſes* and *Indignities*, to ſay we *thought* them *Great* through *their* being our *Adviſers*. In judging then what are *little* things, we muſt not be governed by our own *Pride* and *Paſſions*, but by the *reality of things*, and the Judgments of *diſpaſſionate*, *humble* Perſons. And this our Lord plainly ſhews, by ſetting down a *Box on the Ear*, (which in reality doth no hurt, nor leaves any permanent effect behind it) among thoſe *light* Indignities which ought not to be a matter of a Suit, though every where the *Pride*, and *Paſſions* of men, and particularly at *that time*, the *haughtineſs of*

the

the Jews, thought it a great thing, which ought by all means to be recompenced. For this, as a † Learned man obſerves, was their Rule about it. *Doth any Perſon give his Neighbour a box on the Ear? let him give him a Shilling, yea*, ſays *Rabbi Judah*, *a pound*; *or if it were upon the Cheek, let him give him* 200 † *Zuzes to make amends for it. Nay, if he give him another Box, he ought to give him* 400 *to recompence it.* So *great* did they think the *Indignity* to a *Jewiſh man*, eſteeming all their *own Nation*, as he obſerves from *Maimonides*, even thoſe of the *moſt beggarly condition*, *to be Gentlemen*, becauſe they were all *the Children of* Abraham.

† *Dr.* Lightf. Hor. Heb. *in* Mat. 5. 39.

† i. e. *in* Engliſh coin 6. l. 5 s.

And thus it appears when a Suit is unlawful upon this *firſt* account, *viz. its entring upon an unjuſtifiable Ground.* For ſuch it is in all Caſes, when we bring an Action only for *Revenge*, and not for *Reparation of Damages*; or when for the Reparation of ſuch *ſmall* things, as ought not to expoſe us to all the *Evils* and *Temptations* of a *judicial Proceſs*, but to Exerciſe our *Patience* and *Forgiveneſs*: which *ſmallneſs* of things is to be rated, not by mens *Pride* and *Paſſions*, which eſteem

ſteem no ill ſmall that is done to themſelves, but by the *reality of things*, and the *Judgment of Humble* and *Diſpaſſionate* perſons.

And this holds true, not only in Loſſes and Indignities offered to *our ſelves*; but alſo in the Caſe of *Truſt*, when they are offered to *others* who are committed to us. For when Suits are *Sinful*, as we have ſeen they are in the Caſe of *Revenge*, and of *lighter affronts* and *injuries*, which Chriſt Commands us not to redreſs by Law, but to bear with Patience: I ſee no difference, but an *equal unlawfulneſs*, whether we Sue upon our *own*, or upon *their* Accounts. For ſurely our taking of a *Truſt* doth not ingage us to *Diſobey* our Lord, or do any *evil* thing; but only to do all that which we can, for thoſe committed to us, as *Good Chriſtians* and *Honeſt Men*. And therefore in *lighter* matters when Suits are *ſinful*, we may no more *Sue* for them, than we can tell a *Lie*, or *Swear* an *Oath*, or *Over-reach* in their Cauſe, or be guilty of any *other Tranſgreſſion*. If they were come up to Act in *their own Name*, in theſe caſes a *Judicial Tryal* would not be *lawful*, but a *ſin* in them: And where *they themſelves* could not Sue, we muſt not think that *we*, who Act only as their

Proxies

Proxies and *Repreſentatives*, may do it for them. If theſe Loſſes and Indignities which are ſhewed to them were offered to *our ſelves*, we ought not to commence an Action, but to be patient under them: And they have no Reaſon in the World to think us wanting either in our *Truſt*, or *Friendſhip*, when we do all that to the utmoſt in *their* Caſe, which we durſt do in *our own*.

So far then as Suits are *Sinful*, and to put up injuries without entring Actions for repairs is a *ſtrict Duty*, as it plainly is in caſe of *lighter Loſſes* and *Indignities*; it equally obliges us in *Truſt for others*, as in our *own Buſineſs*. Where 'tis no *Duty*, indeed, and a Suit is not a *Sin*, but only a *Defect* and *Diminution*, as it is in the Caſe of *greater injuries*, there is a Difference, and tho it were commendable ſtill to refrain in our *own* Caſe, yet 'tis not in *theirs*. In the former Inſtances, to forbear is a *neceſſary* point, having an expreſs Precept for it; and neceſſary things may be done for them by thoſe that repreſent them, without their *own* conſent and approbation. But in theſe Caſes where 'tis no ſin, to forbear is no *neceſſary Duty*, but a *voluntary Act*: And it is no part of our Truſt to perform voluntary heights, and unrequired

Generoſities

Generosities at their cost: but if ever these be done, they must be left to themselves, when, by making it a matter of their *own choice*, they themselves may have the *Virtue* and the *Reward* of it. So far then as the putting up an injury without a Suit is no *Strict Duty*, but only a *Free-will Offering*, and a *Voluntary Act*, it must not be done in *their* Case, tho in *our own* it were much to be commended. But when Patience is a Duty, and Suits are *sinful*, whether it be *their* concern or *ours* it matters not, for *both* are *equal*. We must be *faithful to our Lord*, and observe the Duties of *Patience*, *Peace*, *Forgiveness*, and all other Laws of God, in acting for *others* as well as for *our selves*; so that when there is no justifiable Ground of Suit, we must abstain from it, whether it be for *Publick* or for *Private* ends, whether our *Charge* or *we* that are concerned in it. And this I have noted for the use of those, who, I think, are greatly out in this point: For there are several, that *would*, or at least *pretend thy would* bear much in their *own Business*, who will bear nothing at all, and yet think they are not *litigious* in commencing Suits for every trifle, when they are in *Trust for others*.

But as some Suits are thus *unlawful*, because

cauſe *they are upon an unjuſtifiable Ground*; ſo, when the *Grounds* are *good*, are others *unlawful*,

2. Becauſe *they are carried on by a ſinful management.*

A Suit at Law is a very *dangerous ſtate*, and has *ſtrong Temptations* to ſeveral ſins accompanying it: And if, when there is *juſt* Cauſe for it, any of *theſe* are incurr'd in the *management*, it is our *Sin* ſtill, and we ſhall be put to anſwer for it.

To ſhew what *theſe* are, and when Suits are unlawful upon this account, I obſerve, that when we have an Action againſt any Man, we muſt for all that look upon him as our *Neighbour*, and *love him as our ſelves*, paying him all that *Juſtice*, *Peace*, and *Charity*, which is due to all Perſons. And this is hard to do when Men perſue any *controverſies* wherein their Intereſt is concerned, eſpecially when they are *Publick*, and if they do not ſucceed, the Eyes of the World look on to ſee them worſted, as it is in *Law-Suits*. For then *Conqueſt* is the end that is ordinarily ſought, and in proſecution of that Mens *Paſſions* generally are ingaged; and *both* theſe are oppoſite to the *Love of others*, and ſeek only to *pleaſe our ſelves*, and ſo puſh us on to tranſgreſs this great *Law of Charity* in ſeveral inſtances.

For

For where *Conqueſt* is the end, there is much *Emulation* and *Strife* to gain it, and

† Ζῆλος.

where *Envy*, or Emulation, † *and Strife is*, ſaith St. *James*, *there is confuſion and every evil work*, Jam. 3. 16. And where *Paſſion* is high, and *Anger* is once moved, there a *Law of Love* is not like to be obſerved; *for*, as the ſame Apoſtle ſays, *the Wrath of Man worketh not the Righteouſneſs of God*, Jam. 1. 20. And ſince Law-Suits generally have *both* theſe attending them, they do too often lead the *Litigants*, God knows, into many breaches of *Juſtice*, *Peace*, and *Charity* towards each other, particularly into *theſe* following.

If their Cauſe is *bad*, they uſe *delays* to tire out their Adverſaries; they *feign Pleas* to gain time for themſelves, and *inſiſt* upon *Punctilios* in his *Proceedings* wholly *forreign* to the *merits* of the Cauſe, to make him begin all afreſh, and hunt out all *Reſerves of Law* to *prolong the Suit*, and *ſuſpend* the *Sentence*. And this, beſides its being moſt *oppoſite* to *Love* and *Brotherly-kindneſs*, and being a courſe moſt *uncharitable* and *vexatious*, is alſo a moſt *unjuſt* thing, being a doing *wrong* as far as in them lies, and endeavouring, what they can, to put an hindrance and ſtop to *Juſtice*.

And

And whether it be *good* or *bad*, they generally incur many *Sins* in purſuit of it, and fall into ſundry inſtances of *Injuſtice* and *Uncharitableneſs* to ſucceed in it.

They have a *longing deſire to overcome*, and to have the Verdict paſs for them, be it *right* or *wrong*; which is *coveting other Mens Goods*, againſt the Law of the *Tenth* Commandment, *Exod.* 20. 17. And this diſpoſes them to *Judge* all in *Favor* of their *own Right*, and to *fret* and *murmur* when they have loſt the Verdict, and to *ſuſpect* (if not *complain*) of *Injuſtice* in the *Judge* and *Jury*, who were concerned in it; againſt the plain Duty of *Patience*, *Reverence to Governours*, and *meek ſubmiſſion* under Judgment.

They watch their opportunity to *take Advantage* of their Adverſaries *over-ſight*, or to bring the Tryal on at a time when he doth not *expect*, or is *unprepared* for it: which is not only againſt the great Law of *Charity*, that, as St. *Paul* ſaith, *ſeeks not her own* at others Mens hurt, 1 *Cor.* 13. 5; but alſo againſt *Juſtice*, which forbids Defrauding or *going beyond our Brother in any matter*, when we can *Over-reach* and *Out-wit* him in it, 1 *Theſſ.* 4. 6.

They ſuggeſt *Falſe Pleas*, or ſupply Circumſtances out of their own Heads in

in favour of their Cause, and when a little more would do it, stretch beyond the Truth to echout an Evidence, and make the matter fall to serve their purpose; which is clearly against the Duty of *Simplicity*, and *speaking the plain Truth with our Neighbour.*

They have an *inward hatred* against their Adversaries, which makes them *envious* when any *good* (especially in the Process of the Cause) befalls them; and *glad* when any *ill* has happen'd to them, and apt to *surmise ill things* of them, and *defame* them as often as they can find a fit occasion, and to watch all opportunities of being *Revenged* on them, and to burst out into *Anger* and *exasperating Carriage*, *Strife* and *Variance*, *Clamour* and *bitter Words* against them, upon any the least Provocation: all which are directly contrary to the Great Duty of Love and Charity, which † *rejoyces with them that do rejoyce, and weeps with them that weep*; which * *suffers long and is kind*, which *thinketh no Evil*, which † *renders Good for Evil*; which * *puts away all Bitterness, and Wrath, and Anger, and Clamour, and Evil-speaking, with all Malice*;

† Rom. 12. 15.

* 1 Cor. 13. 4, 5.

† Rom. 12. 17, 21.

* Eph. 4. 31.

Malice; and ingages us, ſo far as 'tis † *poſſible, and as much as in us lies, to live peaceably with all men.* † Rom. 12. 18.

Laſtly, They Love to be *vexatious*, and *cut out work* for their *Adverſaries*, deferring a Tryal ſeveral Terms for no other end, but to make them throw away both their Mony and Pains in attending to prevent a Surpriſe; or putting them to prove needleſs things, which influence not the merits of the Cauſe; or inſiſting on every fetch of Law, that may be an hindrance in their way, though 'tis no way neceſſary to the main buſineſs; or ſtudying other miſchievous Arts of creating them trouble, and being vexatious; which is abſolutely againſt the *Loving of our Neighbour as our ſelves*, and having a *Brotherly-kindneſs*, and † *doing Good as we have opportunity to all Perſons*; and is that very ſin which St. *Paul* mentions, and which he expreſſes by *wickedneſs* or *miſchievouſneſs*, *i. e.* a ſtudying to do miſchief, and make † work for others, *Rom.* 1. 29. † Gal. 6. 10.

† Πονηρία ἐκ παρασκευῆς εἰς τίνα παροξυσμὸς γινόμενος, *Suid.*

Thus, to mention no more, are all theſe *Prolongations of Suits, and*

delays

delays of Justice, these *Covetous Desires* and *Acts of Impatience*, these *Arts of Circumvention* and *going beyond our Adversaries*, these *deceitful Suggestions* and *Falsifications in Pleadings*, these *mischievous* and *vexatious ways*, this *Hatred*, *Envy*, *Evil-speakings* and *Surmises*, *Anger*, *Bitterness*, *Strife*, *Clamour*, *Revenge*, &c. which are so ordinarily the Concomitants of Judicial Causes, most unlawful and forbidden things; so that whensoever we have any Suits depending, we sin in them, if any of these intrude and mix with them. A Judicial Controversie that is begun upon a Justifiable Ground, will not be innocent if 'tis carried on by so unjustifiable a management. And therefore to clear our Consciences in all Legal Tryals, we must take care not only that, after all other means of righting our selves have fail'd, the Suit be Commenced for a *thing of weight*, which is a *justifiable Ground*; but also that it be pursued in all this *Justice*, *Charity*, and *Peace*, which makes a *justifiable management*: For 'tis not enough that the Cause be good, unless the manner of maintaining it be good too.

This, I must confess, is an hard Point, because in managing a Suit we are in the way of so many sins, and meet at every turn

turn with ſtrong Temptations, which muſt needs very much indanger us. For all the way theſe ſins lye before us; ſo that unleſs we have a conſtant care, we ſhall ſtep into them. They generally ſerve our ends, and ſet on the cauſe; ſo that we are ſtill under a Temptation to them. And, what through our own Intereſt and the deſire of Conqueſt; what through the oppoſition that is made; unleſs we are very Circumſpect, our Paſſions will be ingaged; and then, more or leſs, we ſhall be hurried into the Commiſſion of them. So that if no Suit be innocent where the Ground is good, except all theſe ſins be avoided in the management; it will be a very hard thing, may ſome ſay, to ſue innocently, and appeal to Courts at all.

This, indeed, is very true, and I am ready to confeſs ſo too. For though ſome *even-temper'd* men, who are endowed not only with great *goodneſs*, but alſo with great *Diſcretion* and *Government of themſelves*, may do it with ſome eaſe, and not find it *very difficult*: yet are thoſe men very few in Number, who are ſo well ſet out and qualified for it. But ordinarily it is a very difficult task, and there is great danger of offending God attending it. For I think there is hard-

ly any thing that ſhews more the *Conduct* and *Goodneſs* of a man, than to be able to keep innocent whilſt he is put upon contending, and ſo to manage a *Suit*, or *other Conteſt*, as that, when he has done, his own Conſcience ſhall have no cauſe to *accuſe* or *condemn* him for it. But then the effect of this can be nothing elſe, but that men be very *ſlow* in coming to it, and very *Circumſpect* in all they do, when in a thing of weight, after other means have been tryed in vain, they cannot avoid it. It muſt make them *ſlow* in coming to it, I ſay; and this, beſides its quitting them of the *hazzard*, will, I believe, make alſo for their *eaſe*; for they will generally find leſs difficulty in *bearing Loſs*, than in *keeping innocent*, whilſt they ſeek *Judicially to repair* it. But when the thing is of ſo great weight, that a Suit cannot well be avoided; it muſt make them very Circumſpect and Watchful over themſelves all the time it is going on, leſt they incur any of theſe ſins in purſuit of it. The greatneſs of their Care muſt anſwer to the greatneſs of the Danger, ſo that they muſt reſolve to ſet a ſtrict Guard upon themſelves in ſuing, or elſe not venture to begin any Suit at all.

And thus it appears, that although in

it

it ſelf a Suit at Law be an innocent thing, yet when 'tis either begun upon an *unjuſtifiable Ground*, or carried on by a *ſinful management*, it is not innocent, but defiles the Conſcience of a Chriſtian. It is our *ſin*, and we muſt account for it, when we ſeek *Revenge* by it, or *Reparation* of a thing ſo *ſmall* as cannot bear it, or of a *weighty* matter by *delays of Juſtice*, *Falſifications*, *Vexations Arts*, or any other Inſtances of *Injuſtice*, or *Uncharitableneſs*, which is a *ſinful way of managing it*. When this is the ſtate of it, there is a great offence in it; and whilſt that laſts, it deprives us of the *Favour of God*, and ought to exclude us from the Holy Sacrament: whereas, were it free of *theſe*, there would be no hurt in it, nor any Cauſe at all why a good Soul ſhould be hindred by it.

As for this Hindrance then, whereby Devout minds are oft-times with-held from coming to this Feaſt, *viz.* their *being ingaged in a Law-Suit*; we ſee now at length what weight is to be laid upon it, and when indeed they ought to be hindred by it. For if there are *no Damages* to be expected in the Cauſe, but we ſue only for *Revenge*; or if, when there are, they are ſo *ſmall* as will not bear a Suit, but ought to be a matter of *Forgiveneſs*;

giveneſs; or if, when the Loſs is of that moment which would juſtifie a Suit, we tranſgreſs any inſtances of *Juſtice* or *Charity* in managing the Proceſs: our Suit is our ſin, which willnot be forgiven us till we ſhew *Repentance*. When 'tis unlawful upon the *unjuſtifiableneſs of the Ground*, we ſin in it till we *put an end* to it; and when upon ſome particular *Injuſtice*, or *Uncharitablneſs* in the *way of management*, we ſin in it till *that particular* is *Corrected* and *Amended*. And ſo long as we are Impenitent in *either* of *theſe*, we are *unfit* for the Holy Sacrament, ſince no man, who allows himſelf in any ſin, is worthy to partake of it. But then we are equally unfit to *Pray*, or perform any other *Religious Service*, or *hope for the Forgiveneſs* of *our Sins* and *Eternal Happineſs*; becauſe, as I have formerly obſerv'd, *Juſtice*, *Peace*, and *Charity*, and other Virtues, are equally neceſſary in all theſe Caſes. If our Suit then is either upon an *unwarrantable Ground*, or ſinful in the *way of management*; ſo long as this ſin *laſts* and is unamended, we are *unworthy to Communicate*. But then that is not all, for ſo we are alſo to *Dye*, to *Pray*, or to have any *Spiritual Peace* or *Comfort*. And this is a ſtate which no wiſe man will perſiſt in for one moment, but, whenſoever

ever he lays it to Heart, forthwith Repent and get out of it; and when once that is done, this Hindrance is removed, and he may be welcome to it. But if it is innocent in *both* these Respects, and none of *these sins* adhere to it; if there is a *weighty Loss* to be repaired, or a *weighty Right* to be got by it; and we are in all Points *Just*, *Charitable*, and *Peaceable* in looking after it, or, when we fail in any instance, do in that, as in all other slips of our *dayly Converse*, watch better the next time, and *immediately Repent* of it: then has a Suit *no offence to God*, nor any hurt at all in it; and so unfits us not for *any good* thing, and then surely not for the *Blessed Sacrament*. When this is our Case, a Tryal at Law depending need no more hinder us from Communicating, than from any other business; so that if there is nothing else to discourage us, we may safely come to the Lords Table, and expect to be kindly entertain'd by him when we do.

CHAP. V.

Of three other Hindrances.

The Contents.

A Seventh *Hindrance, is becauſe others are not in Charity with them, ſo that they are afraid they want that Peace which is required to it. As for other mens uncharitableneſs, it is their ſin, and ſo unfits them; but not being ours, it unfits not us for Receiving. If that ought to exclude any from the Sacrament, it had excluded Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and the Primitive Chriſtians, ſince none had ever ſuch implacable Enemies as they had. Care to be taken that their Enmity be not continued through our Fault; ſo that if we have given juſt occaſion, we muſt endeavour a Reconciliation; and if we gave none, be careful not to hate them again.* An Eighth *Hindrance is, becauſe 'tis a Preſumption in us to come to it, and therefore an Humble man ought in all modeſty to abſtain from it. But,* 1. *'Tis no Preſumption to come when we are call'd, and to do what we are bidden.* 2. *'Tis a very great*

great Presumption to stay away, and leave it undone. 3. *If the height of Priviledge and Honour in it be sufficient to make an humble man refuse the Communion; it will also carry him to renounce the whole Christian Profession.* A Ninth *Hindrance is, because many good People are seldom or never seen at it, so that they have good Company, and may be good too, if they abstain from it.* But, 1. *In inquiring after our own Duty, we are not to ask whether others practise it, but whether Christ has any where enjoyn'd it.* 2. *If any Good People keep from the Sacrament, that is no part of their Goodness, so that therein they are not to be imitated.* 3. *Though they might be acceptably Good, whilst through innocent Scruples and honest Ignorance they were afraid to come to it: yet will it be a very great Fault even in them to Neglect it after they are better informed, which will not be forgiven, but upon their Amendment of it.*

A *Seventh* Hindrance, which keeps back several Persons from the Holy Sacrament, is, because, *although they be with others*, yet *others are not in Charity with them*; and therefore *they are afraid they want that Peace which is required to it.*

Now if this ought to hinder them from the *Communion*, it ought equally to be their hindrance from *Prayers*, and all *Devotion*; since there is the same necessity, as I have noted, of *Peace* and † *Reconcilation* with our Brethren, in *all* of them.

† Mat. 5. 23. 24.

But if this be really their Case, it need not hinder them. For if *other* men will hate us, do what we can, that is our *unhappiness* indeed, whilst we suffer under it; but it is not our *Fault*, nor renders us ever the worse in the Eyes of Almighty God, since we have done nothing to *deserve*, nor is it in our Power to *help* it. God commands us to *Love our Enemies*, so that if we hate them we sin, and are justly kept back by our *own uncharitableness*: but he no where Commands us to *make our Enemies Love us*, so that if after all they will still bear Enmity towards us, that is only *their own* Sin, and therefore whatever it do with *them*, ought not in any Reason to be *our* hindrance.

And indeed if it ought, it would much more have hindred our Saviour *Christ* and his *Apostles* from Communicating, than now it can any *other* Persons; because none of those, who stick at this Impediment, have any Enemies so bitter and implacable,

placable, as *they* found *theirs*. For the *Jews* hated *him* ſo far as to ſeek his *Life*, and at laſt in moſt barbarous ſort obtain'd their Purpoſe. And he tells his *Diſciples*, that the time was coming, when *every one that kill'd them would think* that therein he approved himſelf a Friend of Religion, and *did God good Service*, Joh. 16. 2. And this they all found by ſad Experience, being accounted, as St. *Paul* ſays, *the very filth of the World, and the off-ſcouring of all things*, *i. e.* Nuiſances as neceſſary to be ſwept away, as Dirt out of the Streets, 1 *Cor.* 4. 13; and accordingly being Perſecuted in every place, till they had laid down their Lives for Chriſts ſake and the Goſpels. Thus were they reputed as *Publick Enemies* of all Countries, and hated of all men as the vileſt Miſcreants, that breath'd Infection whereſoever they came, and were the common Peſt of all Places. And therefore if this be a ſufficient Hindrance from the Communion, that *others hate us*, it ſhould always have hindred, and utterly Excommunicated our Saviour *Chriſt*, and his *Apoſtles*, and all the *Chriſtians* of the *firſt Times*, who, being always implacably hated, and moſt ſpitefully Perſecuted, upon this account ought always to have abſtain'd, and not to have receiv'd at all.

As for *others* being *out of Charity with us* therefore, that ought not to be *our* hindrance. But then we muſt take care that *we be in Charity with them*, and that their Hatred to us be not continued through any *Offence* or *Fault* of ours, elſe ſhall we be kept back through our *own Uncharitableneſs*. So that if we gave *juſt* Cauſe for their Wrathful Indignation, by *confeſſing our Fault*, and *repairing the Wrong*, we muſt indeavour a *Reconciliation*: or if we gave *none*, we muſt ſtill be careful to *love them*, though they will not be perſwaded to *love us*, and not harbour any *Enmity* or *Hatred* towards them again.

If we have given juſt Cauſe, I ſay, *for their wrathful Indignation*, through any *Injuries*, or *Offences* we have offered them; by *confeſſing our Fault*, and *repairing the wrong*, *we muſt indeavour a Reconciliation*. When we have done any thing whereat they are diſpleaſed, if they have *no* Reaſon for it, we muſt ſeek to inform them better, and rectifie their miſtakes about it: but if they *have*, we muſt give them all proper ſatisfaction, and make a juſt amends for it. If we have given them *juſt* Offence, by *Affronts*, or *contumelious Carriage*; we muſt *acknowledge our Fault*, and *promiſe* to do ſo no more, and *ask Forgiveneſs*:

giveneſs: and if we have *injuriouſly prejudiced* them in their *Eſtates*, *Good Names*, or *Buſineſs*; we muſt, as far as in us lies, *repair the loſs* which they have ſuſtain'd by us. And this God expects from us, before he will accept our *Offerings*, or be pleas'd with us in *any* Ordinance. *When thou bringeſt thy Gift to the Altar*, ſays our Saviour, *and there remembreſt that thy Brother hath ought againſt thee, go thy way, firſt be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift.* Mat. 5. 23, 24.

But if *they hate us* when *we gave no Cauſe for it*, nor have in any wiſe *deſerv'd* it of them; yet muſt we ſtill *be careful to Love them, though they will not be perſwaded to Love us*, and not *harbour any Enmity, or Hatred towards them again.*

We muſt Love them, I ſay; not with that *Degree* of Love, indeed, wherewith we embrace our *particular Friends*, and thoſe who have *better deſerved of us*; but with that which we owe in *common to all Perſons.* We muſt have ſo much affection for them, as will reſtrain us both from *doing* and *ſpeaking Evil* of them, and make us exerciſe all that *Juſtice*, and ſhew that *kindneſs* towards them in all Converſation, which is due to the promiſcuous multitude of other men. For all theſe Inſtances of *general Charity*, are

due to our very *Enemies*, as I have already shewn: so that when they are unmoveable in their Hatred, and persist in their malicious ways; yet must not that provoke us into any spiteful Returns, or chase us into any hard Speeches, or injurious or unkind Carriage towards them again.

And thus it appears what is to be thought of this Hindrance, *viz.* the *implacableness of some ill Neighbours, and their unconquerable Enmity against us.* For when 'tis our hard hap to fall among such Persons, we must still *Love them*, and be at *Peace with them* in our own minds, though we *never gave* them any *just Cause* to be angred; and if *we did*, by *confessing of our Fault*, and *repairing of the Wrong* which makes the Breach, we must indeavour after a *Reconcilement*. But if after all, they are *obstinate*, and *unmoveable in their hatred*; that is *their own Fault*, which may justly hinder *them*, but ought not to detain us from the Holy Sacrament. For although God requires a worthy Receiver to *Love his Enemies*, yet he no where requires him to *make his Enemies Love him*; and if *no* Person could Communicate worthily, whilst he has an *unreconciled Enemy*, our Blessed *Saviour*, and

his

his Apoſtles, and all the *firſt* and *beſt Chriſtians*, had been moſt unworthy, and could never have received at all.

An *Eighth* hindrance, which holds back ſeveral Perſons from coming to this Feaſt, notwithſtanding it is ſo much both their *Duty* and their *Priviledge*, as I have ſhewn, to join in it; is becauſe *it looks like an high Preſumption in us to Feaſt on the Body* and *Blood of our Sovereign Lord*, and to eat *at the ſame Table with Almighty God*; and therefore an *humble man ought in all modeſty to abſtain from it.*

I have already conſidered that *unworthineſs* which reſpects the *manner of receiving*, and anſwered thoſe who urge that they are *unworthy to Communicate*, meaning thereby that they want that *height of Virtuous* and *Devout Tempers*, which they apprehend God has required to it. But this unworthineſs is not from the want of ſuch *due Diſpoſitions*, or from the *Indecency* in the *unſuitable Receiving*; but from the *inacceſſible height* and *greatneſs of the thing*, which they think is ſo far above us, that *fit*, or *unfit*, *no* Perſon is worthy of it, but that 'tis boldneſs and preſumption in any one to touch things ſo ſurpaſſing high and excellent. But to ſatisfie theſe Perſons, who think it a piece of *Arrogance* and *Preſumption* to

come to this Holy Sacrament, when their Lord not only *Requests*, but *Commands* it, I shall suggest to them these *three* things.

1. It *is no Presumption to come when we are call'd, and to do what we are bidden.* But,

2. It *is a very great boldness and presumption to stay away, and leave it undone.*

3. If *the height of Privilege and Honour in it, be sufficient to make an humble modest man refuse the Communion; it will not rest in that alone, but carry him on equally to renounce the whole Christian Profession.*

1. I say, It *is no Presumption to come to this Feast when we are call'd, and to do what we are bidden.* If we should intrude of our *own* accord, and come uninvited, we might be too *bold*, indeed, and very *rudely Arrogant*. But when we are particularly sent to, and call'd to come, especially if there be, as in this Case there is, great earnestness and importunity in the Invitation; it is the part of an *humble* man to comply with it, and he is not Guilty of the least shew of *Arrogance* and *Ill-breeding* in so doing. There is *Civility* shewn sometimes in *accepting*, as well as in *offering* kindnesses, and it is *Good manners* to *receive what God would have us*, yea, indeed, to accept any thing from the hands of our *Betters*. So that in all *Civility* and

and *inoffensive Carriage* we were bound to come, had we nothing more than a *Friendly Invitation.* But besides that, God has expresly injoyn'd, as I have observ'd, and peremptorily required it of us: So that now we must approach to it, not only out of *Civility* and *Respect*, but also out of *Obedience* to his Commandment. And *true Humility* is no hindrance, but the greatest furtherance in the World to such a Service, it being not the part of a *Presumptuous*, but of a *truly humble* man to do what he is bidden, and to please those whom he is bound in Duty to obey.

It is no Presumption then to come to the Sacrament when we are call'd, and to do what we are bidden: but,

2. It *is a very great Boldness and Presumption to stay away, and leave it undone.* He is no *proud* man who *accepts* a kindness when 'tis *offer'd*, and he is *earnestly invited* to it: but he may shew *Pride* and *Haughtiness* enough, who *slights* and *despises* it. And he is no *bold* man, that *doth* what he is *Commanded*; but he shews *Boldness* and *presumes* indeed, that dare venture to *Transgress* it. There are no men so bold and Presumptuous with God, as they who will act what he forbids, and refuse to do what he injoyns them: So that it is truly

ly an high Presumption to stay away, when he has expressly charged us, both upon our *Duty* and our *Love* for him, to joyn in the Communion.

3. If *the height of Priviledge and Honour in it, be sufficient to make an humble modest man refuse the Communion*; since his *whole Religion* is made up of *high Characters* and *honourable Priviledges, it will not rest in that alone, but carry him on equally to renounce the whole Christian Profession.* What thinks he of *Holy Baptism*, wherein he was made not only a *Servant*, but a *Child of God*; not only a *Friend*, but a *Brother* and *Joint-heir with Christ*; and an *Inheritor*, not of a *small Estate*, but of a *Kingdome*, and that no *cheap* or *fading* one neither, but of the *Kingdom of Heaven*? What thinks he of the *happiness of another Life*, wherein God will fill us with *unutterable Joys*, and adorn us with *Crowns* and *Scepters*, and take us, as † Rev. 3. 21. our Saviour † says, into the *same Throne with himself*? What thinks he of his *Redemption* being purchased at so dear a rate, which could not be obtain'd, unless *Jesus Christ*, *Gods only Son*, would *come down from Heaven*, and be *made man*, and pay down his *own Life* for it? Are not *all these* as superlatively high things, and as much above us,

us, as *Feasting with God in the Communion* is? Is it not as great a *Presumption* in us to become *Gods Sons*, and to *inherit Kingdoms*, and to hope for *Crowns*, and *Thrones*, and *Scepters*; as it is to *sit down with him as his Guests*, and to *eat* and *drink in his own Presence?* Is it not as high *Arrogance* to *admit* that *Christ should dye for us*, as it is to come and *remember his Death*, and to *accept those Benefits* which are thereby *convey'd* to us? All these things are infinitely above us, and we could not have had the Face to have asked any of them, if God had referr'd it to our own choice, and bid us name what we would for our own selves. But yet, since in his unbounded Love and Kindness he has *freely offered* them, we must have the good manners in all *forward Thankfulness* and *Humility* to *accept*, and not out of a shew of *Modesty* and *unreasonable Self-abasement refuse* them. When God calls us then to Feast with him in the Holy Sacrament, and to feed upon the Body and Blood of our dear Lord; we must not hold back because there is so eminent a Priviledge, and high an Honour in it. For we receive no greater Favour or higher Honour *therein*, than in being made *Gods Children*, as we were in *Holy Baptism*; than in *Christs Incarnation*, *Death* and *Suffering*;

fering; than in the offers of *Crowns*, and *Thrones*, and the other *Glorious Priviledges* of *our Religion*: So that if the *Fear of receiving too much honour from God* ought to put us by the *Communion*; it ought as much to the full to put us by our *Baptism*, and the whole *Christian Profession*.

As for those then who are hindred from the Sacrament, by the fear of being too *Bold* and *Presumptuous* with God in coming to a *Feast*, which has such *height of Priviledge* and *Honour* in it: they are hindred without any just Ground, and kept back by what they ought not. For it is no *Presumption*, but the part of *humble* men, to *come when they are call'd*, and to *do what they are bidden*; but it is a very *great Boldness and Presumption to stay away*, and *leave it undone*; and if the *height of Priviledge* and *Honour in it*, be *sufficient to keep back humble Souls from this Feast*, it must also keep them back from *Baptism*, wherein the same Honours are conferr'd which are in it, and carry them in the *same guise of Modesty* to refuse *Christs dying for them*, and all the *hopes of Heaven*, and, in a word, their *Christianity* and *whole Religion* too.

A *Ninth* Plea, whereby several Persons are wont to excuse their not coming to the Sacrament, is because *many Good*

People

People are ſeldom or never ſeen at it, and therefore they may be good too, and have good Company, if they keep away from it.

Now, as for thoſe who urge this in excuſe, I would deſire them to conſider, that when they are inquiring after their *own Duty* in any matter, it is no right way to ask whether *others Practiſe it*, but whether their *Lord* has any where *Commanded* it. For mens Practice is not always fully anſwerable to their *own* Duty, and ſo is a very falſe Rule whereby to judge of *ours*. All Perſons have their Faults, and though no Good man can continue in any *willful* ones, yet will even they be ſubject to ſeveral *Ignorant ſlips*, and *unadviſed miſcarriages*. But when at any time they either *willfully* break any Commandment, or *ignorantly* miſtake it; that is no warranty for us to do ſo likewiſe. So that if we would truly underſtand whether we are bound to Communicate, our way is not to inquire whether others do it, but whether our Lord has any where injoyn'd it; for if he has, we are certainly obliged to it whether others obſerve it or no.

But in more Particular Anſwer to this Plea, I muſt tell them,

1*ſt*, That *if any good People keep away from the Sacrament, that is no part of their* good

goodneſs, but their blemiſh, ſo that therein they are not to be imitated.

2*ly*, That *although they might be acceptably good, whilſt through innocent Scruples, and honeſt Ignorance, they were afraid to come to it; yet will it be a very great Fault even in them to Neglect it, after they are better inform'd, which will not be forgiven, but upon their amendment of it.*

1. I ſay, *If any Good People keep away from the Sacrament, that is no part of their Goodneſs but their Blemiſh, ſo that therein they are not to be imitated.* For we have Gods *expreſs Command* to come, and that we cannot ſlight without being diſobedient, and guilty of a plain Tranſgreſſion: We are call'd therein to ſhew our ſelves *thankfully mindful* of our Bleſſed *Saviours Death*, and of all that he has done; and this Call we cannot deny, without proclaiming our ſelves moſt *ſhamefully unthankful* towards him: We are ſummon'd in to *profeſs Repentance* and *Amendment* of *all our ſins*, and this we cannot honeſtly decline, if *really* we are *reſolv'd* to leave them: We are invited to *declare our ſelves at Peace* with all the Members of our Lord, and reconciled to all the Chriſtian World; and this Invitation no man can fairly refuſe, who in very deed is in *Charity*, and an *hearty Friend* to them. Gods

Law

Law peremptorily *injoyns*, and the things therein imply'd ſtraitly oblige us to partake of the Sacrament when an opportunity is offer'd; ſo that every man, who makes *Conſcience of his Duty*, and regards Obedience to his Lord, muſt be careful to join in it. And it is the *Greateſt means* of a good Life, and Obligation to Amendment that can be preſcribed; ſo that every one who has a *juſt care of his own Soul*, and is earneſtly deſirous of Virtuous Improvements, will ſeek to be admitted to it. A Good mans *Duty* binds him, and the *care of his own Soul* ingages him to Communicate; ſo that there is neither *Virtue* nor *Prudence* ſhewn in ſtaying away, nor is it any part of Goodneſs to Neglect it. And therefore if any Perſons otherwiſe Good are ſeldom ſeen at the Bleſſed Sacrament, that is no part of their Goodneſs but their Fault, ſo that therein they are not to be imitated.

2. *Though they might be acceptably Good,* whilſt *through innocent Scruples*, and *honeſt Ignorance, they were afraid to receive it; yet will it be a very great Fault even in them to Neglect it after they are better inform'd, which will not be forgiven, but upon their Amendment of it.*

A Good Man cannot indulge himſelf in

in *any known Sin*; for he ceaſes to be good and acceptable to God, if he perſiſts in any of them, after he is plainly told of them, and his Duty is evidently ſet before him. *The Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againſt all unrighteouſneſs*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *Rom.* 1. 18. And *he that breaks one* Law, ſaith St. *James*, *is guilty of all*, *i. e.* of that Eternal Puniſhment which is denounced, not barely to ſome one, but to all, *Jam.* 2. 10. So that when once this Great Duty of coming to the Sacrament is clearly laid out, and his Conſcience is inlighten'd and poſſeſſed with a Senſe of it; he can be no Good man who willfully holds off ſtill, and refrains to come to it. Whilſt he was perplex'd with *Doubts* about it, indeed, and either through the *looſe* Diſcourſes of ſome, thought himſelf *not obliged*; or, through the *unreaſonable Rigour* and *Severity* of others, after all his Repentance and full purpoſes of Amendment, thought himſelf ſtill *unprepared* to come to it: for the pitiableneſs of his *Ignorance* and *unwill'd miſtake*, ſo long as they laſted, his Neglect of it may be excuſed and connived at. But if after all his *Doubts* have been *ſolv'd*, and things have been ſet in a *clearer Light*, he continue ſtill to ſlight it; then he is Guilty of a very *great Fault*,

Fault, which will not be *forgiven* till he *Repents* and *Amends* it. *To him that knows to do Good, and doth it not*, ſays St. *James*, *to him 'tis Sin*, *Jam.* 4. 17. And when any willfull ſin ſtands charg'd on our account, it will not be ſtruck off till we forſake and turn away from it. For to all ſuch Sinners, Gods Declaration is this, *Except you Repent, you ſhall all periſh*, Luc. 13. 3.

As for thoſe then who urge this in excuſe for their not coming to the Sacrament, becauſe *ſeveral Good People are ſeldom, or never ſeen at it*: My Anſwer to them in *ſum* is this. In *judging what is our Duty*, we muſt not take our meaſures from *other mens Practice*, but from our *Bleſſed Lords Commandments*; ſince, if they diſobey any Precept, that is no excuſe to us, nor gives us any warranty for companies ſake to diſobey likewiſe. And as for the Sacrament in particular, if any *Good* People *keep away* from it, that is *no part of their Goodneſs*; ſo that therein they are not to be imitated. Nay, if they *continue* in this *Neglect*, after their *Conſciences* are *rightly inſtructed* and informed about it; they *ceaſe to be Good* and commit a *Damning Fault*, an *Impenitent continuance* in any *one known ſin* putting any Perſon out of a *gracious State*. Whilſt they

they were held back purely by *Doubts* and *Scruples*, and *want of Knowledge* without their own Fault; their Omission was fit to be *connived* at, and they might continue acceptably Good notwithstanding it. But if still they persist in it, after they know more, and are better instructed; they are Guilty of a very criminal Neglect, which will not be passed over, but upon the same Terms as all other known sins are, *i. e.* their *Repentance* of it. If they stay away out of Ignorance and Mistake, all they can expect is to be pitied, but not to be commended for it; and if out of willfulness after their Conscience has been set right, they will be severely punish'd unless they are reclaim'd from it: So that no man must ever hope to justify himself in refraining the Lords Table because he has good Company, and knows of several others, whom he takes to be very Holy Persons, that are wont to refrain it too.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of two more Hindrances.

The Contents.

A Tenth *Hindrance is, becauſe others who are unworthy of it, are admitted to join in it. But,* 1. *They ought not to be forward in judging others unworthy, leſt they be miſtaken in it.* 2. *When ſome, who, as they have great cauſe to think, are unworthy, do receive, yet ought not that to hinder them from joining in it. For if it be a ſufficient Hindrance, it had equally hindred our Saviour Chriſt, and the Primitive Chriſtians. It ought not only to hinder us from the Communion, but alſo from being Members of the Chriſtian Church and Profeſſion; but 'tis plainly of no Force for either of them, ſince one man ſhall not bear anothers, but every man his own burden.* 3. *If ſtill any are really offended at the Communion of the Wicked, upon complaint made in the Congregation they are to be ſuſpended from the Holy Table, and denied the Sacrament. An* Eleventh *Hindrance is the Geſture*

of

of Kneeling, which is required to it. When any are abſent upon this account, there is no excuſe from it. Three things inſiſted on to prevent their being hindred by it. 1. *Kneeling is no unſuitable Poſture in receiving, ſo that if we were left at Liberty, we might have enough to juſtifie our ſelves in making uſe of it.* 2. *It is appointed by our Governours, whom God Commands us to obey in all lawful Things; ſo that every Good man ought to obſerve it. But if it neither had Authority to injoyn, nor Reaſon to recommend it, but another Poſture might be better uſed: Yet,* 3. *Since it may lawfully, though not ſo well, be uſed too, for the Sacraments ſake, which is not otherwiſe to be had, we ſhould at leaſt comply with it. No Hindrance to this Complyance, becauſe the Geſture of Kneeling is different from what our Saviour uſed. For ſo is ſitting too, and therefore they and we are equally concerned to anſwer it. The Poſture he uſed was no part of the Inſtitution, ſo that the Inſtitution is not broken when the Poſture is altered. Neither it, nor any other, has any Command of God for it; ſo that none is neceſſary, but all are ſtill indifferent. When a Poſture, different from that at the firſt Inſtitution, was introduced in Sacraments, our Saviour himſelf, and*

they

they too have ſubmitted to it. Again, no hindrance to it from the fear of worſhiping the Bread, or its being a Popiſh Rite. A concluſion of this point.

A *Tenth* Cauſe which many Perſons are wont to Aſſign for their abſenting from this Feaſt, is, becauſe *others, who are unworthy of it, are admited to joyn in it.* Tho this be a very good thing, yet they fear they ſhould give offence in doing it with all Partners, and how worthy ſoever they may be in themſelves, would be defiled by the unworthineſs of others; ſo that unleſs they can receive in an unmixt Company, and only with the pure and true Believers, they think beſt to ſtay away, and not receive at all.

But that they may not be kept back by this hindrance, I ſhall obſerve to them theſe *three things.*

1. *That they ought not to be forward in judging any others unworthy, leſt they be miſtaken in it.*

2. *When ſome, who, as they have great cauſe to think, are unworthy, do receive, yet ought not that to hinder them from it.*

3. *If it happen that any are really Scandaliz'd at the ſight of ſuch as are notoriouſly Wicked, or have done any wrong to their Neighbours, either in word or deed; upon*

¶ *on*

on complaint made in the Congregation, they are to be ſuſpended from the Holy Table, and denyed the Sacrament.

1. I ſay, *they ought not to be forward in judging any others unworthy to communicate, leſt they be miſtaken in it.* For every *Penitent* Man, who is fully *Reſolved* to leave all his Sins, is really worthy to receive the Sacrament: and whether the Perſon they think unworthy be ſo reſolved or no, is very hard for them to judge, ſince no Man can ſee into anothers Heart, and only God and his own Soul are privy to it. When he comes to the Lords Table, every Communicant profeſſes to Repent, and promiſes to lead a New Life thenceforward: and when he ſolemnly declares he is thus reſolved, 'tis hard for another Perſon, who cannot ſee into his Soul, to ſay he is not, but is ſtill impenitent. Tho all Good Men therefore may be free in judging of themſelves, yet ought they to be very wary how they paſs a Judgment on the unworthineſs of others: They muſt not be forward to pronounce of it, becauſe 'tis hard for them to know it; ſo that when they give Sentence againſt their Brethren in this point, 'tis venturouſly done, and they are liable to be deceived in it.

2. *When ſome others, who, as they have great*

great cauſe to think, are unworthy, do Receive the Sacrament; yet ought not that to hinder them from joyning in it. Our Buſineſs ſhould not be to move Queſtions and Diſputes about the preparedneſs of others, but to be careful duly to prepare our ſelves; and when once we are fitly qualified for it, we ought to come whether they be ſo or no. Their unworthineſs will have all its effect upon themſelves, but will not hinder our acceptance, nor ought to put us by from doing both our Saviour, and our own Souls this Service.

To ſhew this, I ſhall obſerve theſe *three* things.

1. *If the company of ill and unworthy Perſons be a ſufficient hindrance, it would equally have hindred our Saviour Chriſt, and the Primitive Chriſtians.*

2. *It ought not only to hinder us from the Communion, but alſo from being Members of the Chriſtian Church and Profeſſion.* But,

3. *One ſhall not bear anothers, but every Man his own Burden; ſo that if not we, but only they are unworthy, we are ſafe, and may freely come, and they alone are to be debarred from Receiving.*

1. *If the Company of ill and unworthy Perſons be a ſufficient hindrance, it is not ſo barely unto us, but would equally have hindred our Saviour Chriſt, and the Primitive*

Christians. For when our Lord eat his *own Supper*, it was not with a *Select* Company of *worthy Receivers*, but with a *mixt* multitude of *Saints* and *Sinners*. Thus he found it in the *Jewish Passover*; for *all the Congregation of Israel*, both good and bad, were to *eat of it*, and none but *Foreiners* and *hired Servants* were excluded from it, *Exod.* 12. 45, 47. And the like mixture of *Guests* he allowed, when he instituted this Feast instead of it. For in great likelyhood *Judas*, who, as the Scripture says, *was* † *Joh.* 12. 6. *a* † *Thief*, and *the* * *Son of* * *Joh.* 17. 12. *Perdition*, was one of the twelve that Communicated with him, *Mat.* 26. 20, 25, 26. *Luc.* 22. 20, 21. And in the *first* times, all Christians, as I have shewn, who came together to *pray* to God, met also to *receive* the Holy Sacrament, that being then a constant part of their Publick Worship. The Number of *Communicants* in those Days, was the same with the number of *Christians* or *Baptized* Persons; for all Men then met in the Communion, who were made Members of Christs Mystical Body the Church by *Baptism*, and were not cut off again by *Excommunication*: as St. *Paul* plainly intimates, when he says of all those *many*, who make up *the one Body*,

dy, that they *are all partakers of that one Bread*, 1 Cor. 10. 17; and of all thoſe who *have been Baptized into one Body*, that they *have been all made to drink into one Spirit*, 1 Cor. 12. 13. So that *their* Communions, as well as *ours*, were mixt Aſſemblies, which were made up of worthy and unworthy Receivers; and therefore if other Mens unworthineſs ought to be our hindrance, it ſhould alſo have hindred our Bleſſed Saviour Chriſt, and his Apoſtles, and the Primitive Chriſtians, who, if this be a good Reaſon for it, ſhould all have forborn the Sacrament, becauſe *Judas*, a loſt man, and other unprepared, and unworthy Perſons, met alſo with them at the ſame time to partake in it.

2. *If the Company of unworthy Perſons be a juſt impediment from the Communion, it ought to hinder us alſo from being Members of the Chriſtian Church and Profeſſion.* For the *Church* it ſelf is a *mixt* multitude of fit and unfit, of holy and unholy Perſons. It is compared to a *Net*, wherein *Fiſh of all ſorts are caught*, both *good* and *bad*, *Mat* 13. 47, 48: to a *Field*, where both *Wheat* and *Tares ſpring up*, and wherein *both muſt grow together till the Harveſt*, v. 24, 25, 30. All Chriſtians are not ſuch as their Saviour Chriſt

was, and such as their Religion requires they should be: and therefore if we refuse to share in any *holy thing* whilst some unworthy Persons pretend to it, and will not joyn in any *Act* or *State* wherein ill men participate; we must not only shun the *Communion*, but cease also to be members of the *Church*, or Profess the *Christian Religion*. Nay, I might add further, since *all Communities* have *some* Corrupt Members, and in every Body of Men there are some Vicious as well as Godly Persons; if we decline all Society and fellowship which has ill Men to partake in it, we must not stop in avoiding the Communion, and leaping out of the Christian Church and Profession, but, if we run on so far as this Principle will lead us, become Out-Laws to *Families*, *Townships*, *Kingdoms*, yea to all Mankind.

3. *One shall not bear anothers, but every Man his own Burden; so that if not we, but only they are unworthy, we are safe, and may freely come, and they alone are debarr'd from receiving.* God will not punish one Soul for anothers fault, or be angry at *this*, because *that* Person has deserv'd it. But every Man shall stand or fall by his own Work, and either be approved or rejected as it prepares him for it. *Let every*

every Man prove his own Work, ſaith the Apoſtle, *for every Man ſhall bear his own Burden*, Eph. 6. 4, 5. So that if we take care to come worthily our ſelves, we ſhall be kindly treated and accepted by him, and not any ways prejudiced or frown'd upon, for the unworthineſs and undue Preparation of other men.

Thus ought not the ſight of ſome unworthy Perſons joyning in it, to ſtrike any Terror into us, or drive us from the Holy Sacrament. There is a great *Sin*, and a great *Danger* in unworthy Receiveing, which is enough to diſcourage all impenitent unworthy men from *offering* at it; and where the *Cenſures* of the *Church* are held in any eſteem, and are likely to gain their end through the Awe and Reverence men have for them, the *Governours of the Church*, both out of Compaſſion for their Souls, and concern for the honour of this Ordinance, may ſee cauſe to *remove* them from it. But if neither the *Danger of the thing*, nor any *Affectionate* and *fair Warning*, nor the *enfeebled Hand of Diſcipline*, when it is become impotent, and of ſmall account, through the *Number of Offenders*, who are too ſtrong for it, or through the *multitude of Schiſms* and *Diviſions*, one party entertaining what another excludes, which

cuts off all the Force of it: If notwithstanding all these, I say, unworthy men will still press in, and presume to Communicate; yet is their unworthiness only to *themselves*: but as for *others*, who are truly worthy, they have no hurt at all by it; they shall not suffer for their Brethrens sins, nor are incapacitated by their unfitnesses; so that whilst they have no unworthiness in their own Souls, they may approach the Holy Table, and chearfully receive still.

But yet further.

3. *If any should be really scandalised at the Presence of those who are notoriously wicked, or who have done any wrong to their Neighbours, either in word, or deed; upon Complaint made in the Congregation, they are to be suspended from the Holy Table, and denied the Sacrament.* For this Care our Church has taken in this Case, to prevent all those, whose wickedness gives publick Scandal and Offence, from sharing in these Holy Mysteries. *If any* Communicant, says the *Rubrick* before the *Communion-Service, be an open and notorious evil liver, or have done any wrong to his Neighbour by Word or Deed, so that the Congregation be thereby offended; the Curate having knowledge thereof, shall call him, and advertise him, that in any wise he pre-*

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ſume not to come to the Lords Table, until he hath openly declared himſelf to have truly Repented and Amended his former naughty Life, that the Congregation may thereby be ſatisfied, which before were offended; and that he hath recompenced the Parties to whom he hath done wrong, or at leaſt declare himſelf to be in full purpoſe ſo to do as ſoon as conveniently he may.

As for thoſe then who are kept back from this Feaſt, becauſe they ſee *ſome unworthy Perſons are admitted to it*, my Anſwer to them in brief is this: That they ought not to be forward in *judging any others unworthy*, becauſe 'tis hard for them to *know* it, and they are liable to be *miſtaken* in it. And that when they have *great* and *plain* cauſe to conclude *others unworthy*, yet ought not that in any wiſe to *hinder* them, who are *truly worthy*, from coming to it. For if the Company of unworthy Receivers were a juſt Hindrance, it would have hindred our *Bleſſed Lord* and the *Primitive Chriſtians*, ſince it lay in *their* way as well as now it doth in *ours*; it would not reſt in with-holding us from the *Communion*, but ſerve equally to put us by from being *Members* of the *Church*, or profeſſing the *Chriſtian Religion*; but it is plainly of no force for either of them, ſince *one* man ſhall not

bear *anothers*, but *every one* his *own* Burden. But if ſtill any are really ſcandaliſed by the Company of ſuch as are notoriouſly wicked, that offence may be removed when they have a mind to it; for upon *complaint* made, thoſe unworthy Perſons are to be *ſuſpended* from the *Holy Table*, and denied the Sacrament.

An *Eleventh* Hindrance, whereby ſeveral perſons are kept back from joyning in this Feaſt, is the *Geſture which is required to it*. For though right-gladly they *would be admitted to the Sacrament*, yet they *dare not Kneel, as the Church appoints all men to do, when they receive it*.

Now when any Perſons refuſe the Holy Sacrament upon this account, they have no ſufficient Plea, or juſt Excuſe from it. When our Lord ſhall ask them at the laſt Day, *why they did not Communicate according to his appointment*? It will be but a bad Anſwer in them to ſay, it was becauſe *they could not ſit*, or uſe ſome *other Poſture which they thought convenient*: For ſince he has only required the *Thing*, but has no where injoyn'd the *Geſture* we are to receive in; he will have juſt Reaſon to reply to ſuch Men, That then it ſeems they would not do what *he bid* them, unleſs at the ſame time they could do that alſo which he had *not bidden*, nor perform

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his will, unleſs withall they ſhould be allowed to have their *own*; which juſtly merits a ſevere Reproof, but is far from being a matter of Commendation.

But that they may not inexcuſably Neglect ſo great a Commandment, upon ſo weak a Reaſon for it, I would offer to their Conſideration theſe three things.

1. *Kneeling is no unſuitable Poſture in receiving the Holy Sacrament; ſo that if we were left at Liberty, we might have enough to juſtifie our ſelves in making uſe of it.*

2. *It is appointed by our Governours, whom God Commands us to obey in all Lawful things; ſo that every Good man, who is under Authority, ought to obſerve it.*

But if it were not our Duty when Authority has thus required the uſe of it, and it had no Reaſons from it ſelf to recommend it, but it were much better that ſome other Poſture ſhould be uſed: yet,

3. *Since it lawfully may be uſed too, tho' not ſo well as another, if men have any due value for, and deſire of the Sacrament, for its ſake, and rather than miſs of it, they ſhould at leaſt comply with it.*

1. *Kneeling is no unſuitable Poſture in receiving the Holy Sacrament, ſo that if*

we were left at Liberty, we might have enough to justifie our selves in making use of it. For the Sacrament, as I have already shew'd, is a *Religious Feast*, wherein we are set in the *Presence of*, and are *concerned with Almighty God*: and when we have to do with him, 'tis no ways unfit sure to use such Posture as is *Humble* and *Reverent*. It is a Feast wherein we *receive the greatest Benefits*, no less than our Saviour *Christs* Blessed *Body* and *Blood*, *i. e.* those Benefits which his Bloody Death procured: and when we *receive Gifts*, especially of that *infinite Price*, and from our *Betters* and *Supream Governours*, it cannot misbecome us to use such Carriage as expresses most *Respect* and *Thankfulness*. It is a Feast whereat we *confirm the New Covenant*, and solemnly *give Thanks* and *Praise* to Christ, and pour out many *Prayers* and *Promises* to our Heavenly Lord: and when we are *exercising Repentance*, and *uttering Praise*, and *making solemn Prayers* and *Oblations*, it is not certainly improper to use such Gestures as best become *Devotions*. In the Sacrament we have to *do with Almighty God*, and *receive most noble Gifts*, and *act most humble Repentance* in *shamefully confessing* and *renouncing* of *our sins*, and *give most hearty Thanks*, and *put up most ardent Prayers*: and therefore that Posture

ſture muſt needs ſuit well with *it*, which becomes *theſe* Services; and that *Kneeling* will be allowed to do by all Perſons, ſince it has been ordinarily well liked in all times, nay, preferr'd before others for the *Poſture of Devotions*. As it is a *Supper* and a *Feaſt*, ſome are apt to think *ſitting*, which with us at leaſt is the ordinary *Table-Poſture*, to be moſt convenient. But as this is not a *common*, but a *Religious* Feaſt, wherein we have to do with God, and perform ſo many things whereto all *inward Reverence* and *Humility* is required, there are Reaſons enow that moſt juſtly Authorize *Kneeling* too; ſo that if we direct our Eyes to them, we ſhall ſoon ſee that it may very reaſonably be uſed, and is in no wiſe unſuitable or improper for it. And therefore if we were left at *Liberty* to receive it as we *pleas'd*, we might have enough to *juſtify our ſelves* in making uſe of it.

2. *Kneeling is appointed by our Governours, whom God commands us to obey in all lawful things; ſo that every good man who is under Authority, ought to obſerve it.* God requires us *to be ſubject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magiſtrates*, Tit. 3. 1. and *to obey them that have the Rule over us, and to ſubmit our ſelves; for they watch for our Souls, as they that muſt give an ac-*

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count of them, *Heb.* 13. 17. Now to *obey*, is to *do what we are bidden*; ſo that when they command this Poſture, we are bound in all Duty and Submiſſion to comply with them. Before they injoyn'd it, we were at Liberty to uſe either *it*, or *another*, according to our own Diſcretion. But when once they have interpoſed their Authority, St. *Paul* tells us, that Obedience in all *Lawful* things, ſuch as *Kneeling* is, is our Duty; ſo that although we think another might be *better* uſed, and, were we left to our ſelves, would make uſe of it; yet when once they have injoyn'd this, muſt we deny our ſelves, and ſubmit to it.

But if Kneeling had neither any *Authority* effectually to injoyn, nor any *Reaſon* from it ſelf ſufficient to recommend it; but that *ſitting*, or ſome *other* Poſture were much fitter to be uſed: yet,

3. *Since it may at leaſt lawfully be uſed too, though not ſo well, if men have any due value for, or deſire of the Sacrament; for its ſake, and rather than miſs of it, they ſhould at leaſt comply with it.*

When we are hindred from the Sacrament by *little* things, and refuſe to Communicate unleſs we can have it ordered according to our own liking in all Points, 'tis a ſign we do not think we greatly *need* it,

it, nor are very *desirous* of it; for if we were, 'tis certain small matters would not put us by it. Were we fully sensible how much it is both our *Duty*, and our *Privilege* to partake in it, and thereupon did earnestly covet and long after it, we should be glad to be admitted to it in any Posture, and, so we might joyn in the thing, submit to any Gesture to receive in. If a man refuse a *Present of a thousand Pound*, because it is brought to him in an homely Purse, that is course and much decay'd; or if he will throw back the *conveyance of a fair Estate*, because 'tis seal'd with a *common Stamp*, that wants a *Coat of Armes* to it; all the World would say he would not be so *curious*, if he stood in any great *need* of it. And if any Person should turn away from the most *savoury* and *choicest meat*, because it is dish'd up on *Pewter*, not on *Plate*; the By-standers would all conclude he is full enough already, and has no great *edge of Appetite*. And the case is just the same, when any of us shew niceness about the *Posture* of the Holy Sacrament. For did we really think we were in very great *need* of it, and had such an *ardent desire*, as that we might be said to *hunger* and *thirst* after it; we should be glad to have it in any Posture, as we could be allow'd it. So that although

though *Kneeling* were a Geſture whereto we were no ways obliged, nay, though it were juſtly to be diſliked, not as *unlawful* indeed, but as *inconvenient*; yet when the Sacrament is not otherwiſe to be had, there is no man, who is duly deſirous to receive, but will *comply* with it. He had *rather*, it may be, Communicate *ſitting*, or *ſtanding*, or after ſome other manner which he fancies better, were it left to his own liking; but yet, if he deſires it in ſuch meaſure as he ought, he will *ſubmit* to receive Kneeling, rather than miſs the opportunity, and not receive at all.

And this is the great thing, which I would urge upon all thoſe who are kept back by this Hindrance; namely, that although for its *own ſake* they would not *chuſe* it, yet for the *Sacraments ſake*, which is not otherwiſe to be had, they would at leaſt *comply* with it. In my Judgment it is their *Duty* to Kneel, ſince their Governours require it; and the Poſture is ſo *ſuitable* to the Feaſt, that were it not required, they might have enough to juſtifie themſelves in making uſe of it: and if, upon the Reaſons I have here given, they are convinced of theſe things, that clears the Caſe without more ado, and is the beſt Solution of it.

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But if their prejudices ſtick ſtill after all, and in thoſe Points they happen not to be of my mind, but think themſelves *free* from it, and that *ſitting* is much *better* uſed: yet at leaſt, ſince Kneeling may be uſed too, for the *Sacraments ſake*, which, if they value as they ought, they would gladly accept, though in a Poſture leſs convenient, let them *condeſcend* and *ſubmit* to it. Though they had rather receive ſitting when they may be allowed, yet they may receive kneeling when there is need of it; and they muſt needs think it better to kneel to it, than, by ſtopping at a thing ſo *innocent*, though *leſs ſignificant*, to be quite put by, and go without it.

But againſt this Compliance they may, perhaps, *object*, and it is the faireſt thing which I know ſaid againſt it, That they cannot comply with this *Injunction of Kneeling*, becauſe it is croſs to our *Saviours Inſtitution*; for as he inſtituted the Holy Sacrament, ſo they think we ought to adhere to it.

But to clear this point, which I ſhall do as plainly as I can, becauſe it ſeems to have ſome weight in it, I ſhall obſerve,

1. That *if uſing a Poſture different from what our Saviour did, be a breaking his Inſtitution, ſitting no leſs than kneeling*

is a breach of it, ſo that they and we are equally concerned to anſwer it.

2. *The Poſture he uſed was no part of the Inſtitution, ſo that the Inſtitution is not broken when the Poſture is alter'd: yea, neither it, nor any other has any Command at all for it; ſo that no Poſture is neceſſary, but all, both theirs and ours, are ſtill indifferent.*

3. *When a Poſture different from that at the firſt Inſtitution, was introduced in Sacraments, our Saviour himſelf, and they themſelves too, have ſubmitted to it.*

1. I ſay, *If uſing a Poſture different from what our Saviour did, be a breaking his Inſtitution, ſitting no leſs than kneeling is a breach of it; ſo that they and we are equally concerned to anſwer it.*

The Poſture which our Saviour uſed, was neither *ſitting* nor *kneeling*, but *another* different from both of them. In the *Paſſover* 'tis plain he uſed *lying* or *leaning down*, which was the *Banquetting Geſture* of that time, when they uſed to eat at their Feaſts *lying* upon *Couches*. And thus the *Evangeliſt* expreſſes it; *When Even was come*, ſays St. *Matthew*, *he ſate down*, ſo according to the cuſtom of theſe Countries we render it, but the word is, *he* † *lay down with the twelve*, *Mat.* 26. 20.

† Ἀνέκειτο.

20. And in the 21 of St *John*'s Goſpel, St. *John* is ſaid to have *lean'd on Jeſus Breaſt at Supper*, according to the Faſhion of thoſe Days, when at Meals they lay one within another, *v.* 20. And this Poſture in great likelihood he continued at his own Supper; for they were both *Religious Feaſts*, and there was no more Reaſon why it ſhould be excluded from the *one* than from the *other*. But if when he altered his Geſture, according to the *Jewiſh* Cuſtom, at *giving Thanks*, he continued in that all the time of his *own Supper*, as ſome ſuppoſe; yet was not that either *kneeling* or *ſitting*, but a *ſtanding* Poſture. So that the Geſture our Saviour uſed was as different from ſitting, as it is from kneeling; and therefore if the uſe of one different from his be a breach of his Inſtitution, it is equally broken on all ſides, and one cannot urge it againſt another, but both are alike in Fault, and equally obliged to anſwer it.

And if any ſay, That albeit in ſitting they do vary from the Poſture he uſed, yet is it ſtill to another *Table-Geſture*, which is of the ſame Nature, and may be held Equivalent: I deſire them to conſider, that then *they* are plainly gone off, as well as *we*, from the *Example of our Lord*, and from the Mode he uſed, ſince whereas

whereas he *lay along*, they *ſit upright*, and only ſtick to ſuch a Geſture as agrees to the *Nature of the Feaſt*, and the Notion of the Communion being a *Supper* and a *Banquet*. So that their ſitting is not Authorized by our Lords having uſed it at firſt, for that he never did, but by its being a Table-Geſture, which becomes a Feaſt, and is thereby ſuited to the Nature of the Sacrament. And when once this Ground is admitted, it will make way for kneeling too, ſince there is much alſo in the Nature of the thing to render it very ſuitable and convenient. For, as upon the account of its being a *Feaſt*, whilſt they direct their Eye to that, they may be emboldened'd to *ſit* down at it: ſo alſo upon account of its being a moſt *Venerable* and *Religious Feaſt*, whereat all inward *Reverence* and *profound Humility* is required, they may ſee juſt Reaſon to uſe another more lowly mode, and *kneel* when they receive it. But if ſtill they ſhould think ſitting the more agreeable mode, and that, it being a Table-Geſture, a Supper is beſt ſuited by it: yet would this be no Reaſon why they cannot *comply* with kneeling, but only why, if they were left to their own Liberty, they would not make *choice* of it. For though they would not chuſe it, yet

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are they at Liberty for all that to forbear ſitting, and either to *ſtand*, or *lye*, or *kneel* at a Feaſt when *need* ſo requires it; ſo that whatever it may be to their own *free choice* of it, this can be no hindrance to their *ſubmiſſion* and *compliance* with it.

But ſince both in *their* way and *ours*, the Geſture of our Lord, being now out of date thro' the different uſage of the World, is quite relinquiſh'd; for a full Vindication of them as well as of our ſelves in this Point, I obſerve,

2. That *the Poſture he uſed was no part of the Inſtitution, ſo that the Inſtitution is not broken when the Poſture is alter'd: yea, neither it, nor any other, has any Precept or Command at all for it; ſo that no Poſture is neceſſary, but all, both theirs and ours, are ſtill indifferent.*

The Poſture wherein it is firſt received, I ſay, *is no part of the Inſtitution of a Sacrament, ſo that the Inſtitution is not broken when the Poſture is altered.* It is only the *Thing* which is appointed; but as for the *Poſture*, or the *Time*, or the *Place*, or the *Company*, they are little matters that are unworthy of a particular appointment, and are left at Liberty to be order'd as mens Diſcretion ſhall judge moſt convenient. And, indeed, if the *Geſture* our Lord uſed were any part of the Inſtitution

on of this Holy Feaſt, the *Time*, and *Place*, and *other Circumſtances* would be ſo too; for they ſeem *all* of *equal weight*, and were *all* equally *uſed at firſt*, which is all that the *Geſture* has to plead for it. So that if it be a Part of the Inſtitution to receive in the *leaning Poſture*, becauſe our Lord uſed it; it is equally a Part of it to receive *after Supper*, which is the time he choſe for it; and in an *upper Room*, which was the place wherein he Celebrated it; and only with *men*, who were the Company he invited; and thoſe no more than *twelve*, which was the Number he ſelected. *All theſe* can plead the ſame Title for being parts of the Inſtitution, which the Geſture can, *i. e. their being uſed at the firſt appointment of it*, which is all the claim *it* can make to it: and therefore ſince the *Time*, and *Place*, and *Number*, and *Perſons* are no part, but may be alter'd without any breach of the Inſtitution, as 'tis on all hands concluded they may; the *Poſture* is no part of it, but may be alter'd without any ſuch Infringement alſo.

And to ſhew this more fully, it really *has* been done, and that too in the Judgment of our Lord himſelf without any wrong to the Inſtitution; and that was in the *Jewiſh Paſſover*. For the Poſture wherein it was firſt Celebrated, was in that

that of *Travellers*, with their *Loins girt*, and their *Staves in their hand*, and their *Shoes on their Feet*; yea, and what makes this Circumſtance more conſiderable in their Caſe, it was by *Gods own Order* and *Appointment*. For *thus ſhall you eat it*, ſaith God, *with your Loins girded, and your Shoes on your Feet, and your Staff in your Hand; and you ſhall eat it in haſte, it is the Lords Paſſover*, Exod. 12. 11. But afterwards, in compliance with the courſe of Times and the Cuſtom of other Countries, this *ſtanding Poſture* of Travellers was changed into the *leaning* or *diſcumbing Poſture* of men at eaſe, which change our Saviour himſelf moſt evidently allowed, by his *own uſage* and obſervance of it. For when he ate the *Paſſover* with his *Diſciples*, it was not in the *travelling Poſture* uſed at firſt, but in this *Diſcumbing Poſture*, which was then introduced inſtead of it. *When even was come, Jeſus ſate*, or rather † *lay down to Supper with the twelve*, Mat. 26. 20. † Ἀνέκειτο.

Thus is the Poſture which our Bleſſed Lord uſed in the Sacrament, no *part* of the Inſtitution; ſo that the Inſtitution is not broken, when it is alter'd. And if it had been any part of it, his *lying* could no more be changed into *ſitting*, becauſe it

it is another *Table-Posture*, than the *Bread* and *Wine* into any *other Food* or *Liquour*, because they are a *Table-Furniture*; for the *parts* of the Sacrament must be kept the same as our Saviour left them, and we must not go about to alter and put in others instead of them, lest we be thought to cancel his, and institute a *New Sacrament* of our own.

Yea, *neither it, nor any other, has any Command at all for it; so that no Posture is necessary, but all, both theirs and ours, are still Indifferent.* It is not at all injoyn'd by our *Saviour Christ*, for he only Commands the *Thing*, bidding them *take Bread and eat it, and Wine and drink it*, Mat. 26. 26, 27; and to *do this in Remembrance of him*, Luc. 22. 19; but says not a word prescribing the *Gesture*, *Time*, or *other Circumstances* which they are to use in so doing. Neither is it at all mentioned by St. *Paul*, who, as our Lord had done before, commands only after the mention of the *Bread*, that we should *do that in remembrance of him*; and after the mention of the *Cup*, that we should *drink that in remembrance of him*; but gives no Command at all concerning *Posture*, or any other such inconsiderable and outward thing, 1 *Cor.* 11. 24, 25. And yet he delivered all that to them, which he had received in command

mand from Christ relating to the Holy Communion: *I have received of the Lord*, saith he, *that which I also have delivered unto you*, v. 23. So that altho' God has most strictly commanded the *receiving of the Sacrament*, yet has he no where commanded *any Posture* to be used in it; and therefore *none* of them is *necessary*, but *all*, both *theirs* and *ours*, are still indifferent.

Thus then is our *Kneeling* Posture at the Communion, as also others *Standing*, or *Sitting* where that is the Fashion, no *unlawful* thing, nor any *Breach* of the *Institution*, tho' our Saviour used a *different* one. The Posture he Communicated in, was *no part* of the Appointment; so that there is no Breach of it when that is altered: and neither *it*, nor *any other*, has any *Command* for it; so that none of them are either *necessary* or *unlawful* upon this account, but all may still be used, as *Publick Authority* or *Private Prudence* shall determine it.

And as the Posture used at *first*, without any *Breach* of the *Institution*, or of any *Law of Christ*, may be altered, and a New one lawfully brought in, in stead of it; so,

3ly, *When a Posture different from that at the first Institution was introduced in Sacraments, our Blessed Lord himself, and they themselves too, have submitted to it.* As

As for our *Bleſſed Lord*, the matter is plain of him in the Caſe of the *Paſſover* already mentioned. He found the Poſture different from that which was at firſt uſed in *Egypt*; for then, as I have noted, they *ſtood*, like *Travellers*; but now they *lay down*, like Men at *reſt* and *eaſe*. But ſince *Common Uſage* and *Publick Authority* had altered the former Mode, and ſetled this later in ſtead of it, he would not go to diſpute, but readily conformed himſelf to it. For when he *came to eat the Paſſover*, ſays St. *Matthew*, *he ſate*, or rather *lay down with the twelve*, Mat. 26. 20.

And as for *themſelves*, they do the ſame thing too, in Sitting where that is the Poſture Law or Cuſtom has introduced among them. For *Sitting* is a Geſture very different from what our Saviour uſed, who did not *ſit*, but *lie down* at the Sacrament. But when the *Aſſembly of Divines* had brought in this Mode amongſt us, notwithſtanding its being a Deviation from what was done at firſt, they did then comply with it, and would ſtill adhere to it.

If they will be guided therefore either by their *Saviour's Practice*, or *their own*, in this Point, when *Uſe* and *Publick Authority* have ſetled any Poſture of Communicating, they muſt ſubmit to it. The

Geſture

Geſture which they find among *us*, is not more different from what our *Saviour* uſed, than the Geſture *he* found in the *Paſſover*, was from what the *Jews* firſt uſed in *Egypt*: But yet he made no ſcruple of this Poſture, ſo plainly novel and of a later date, but readily complied with it. In conformity to which *Example*, the *Apoſtle* teaches us in *leſſer* things to make Common Uſages our Rule, for the prevention of all *Diſputes* and *Variance*; ---- *If any man ſeem to be contentious*, in the caſe of *Womens* being *unvail'd* in the Publick Aſſemblies, *we have no ſuch cuſtom, nor the Church of God*, 1 Cor. 11. 16. And the *Sitting* which they think well of, is as different from our *Saviour's Poſture*, as *Kneeling* is; but yet they readily embraced it, when once the *Aſſembly* had directed it. So that if they are but free to follow our *Saviour's Practice*, and St. *Paul's Rule* in this Caſe; or if they will go as far with the *Churches Order*, as formerly they did with the *Aſſemblies*; ſince *Common Uſage* and *Publick Authority* have ſetled Kneeling at the Sacrament among us, they ought not to ſtick out, but to ſubmit to it.

And thus it appears that their *Compliance* with our Uſe of *Kneeling* in the Communion, is not at all againſt our *Sa-*

viour's Institution; so that the fear of wronging that, ought not to hinder any of them from it. It is, indeed, a *different* Posture from what our Lord first used; but if that be a Breach of his Institution, *Sitting* no less than *Kneeling* is a Breach of it: so that *they* and *we* are *equally* concerned to answer it. But in behalf of *both* 'tis easily answered, That the *Posture he used* was *no Part* of the *Institution* of the Sacrament; so that the Institution is not broken, when the Posture is altered: That neither *it*, nor *any other*, has any *Precept* for it; so that none of them is *necessary*, but all *indifferent*, and *lawful* to be used, according as Mens own *private Judgment* and *Discretion*, where they are left to it, shall direct, or *Publick Authority* and *Custom* shall any where prescribe it: and that when *these* have in any Place introduced a Posture *different* from what *he* used, *he himself*, by his own Practice in this very Case, and *they* too who make this Objection, by *theirs*, have taught us to comply with it.

But against this Compliance it is by some still further urged, That *Kneeling* in the Sacrament is *Worshipping the Bread*, and a *Popish Rite*, and therefore they dare not *yield* and *conform* to it.

Now in Answer to its being a *worship-*

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ping the Bread; I would obſerve to them, that there is *no fear* of that, becauſe *we do not kneel to the Bread*, nor *have any intent to worſhip it*: and if really we *did intend* it, *without which there is no Adoration paid to it*, *we ſhould worſhip it whether we kneel or ſit*; ſo that *their mode* and *ours* are *equally concern'd*, and it muſt be own'd on all ſides, that not the *Poſture* but the *Intent* is to be blamed for it.

1. In *kneeling at the Sacrament*, I ſay, *there is no fear of worſhipping the Bread*, becauſe *we do not kneel to it*, *nor have any intent to worſhip it*. If we ſhould *kneel down to the Bread*, indeed, and, ſubmitting our ſelves before it, pay *Divine Honour* and *Homage* to it; this were really to *worſhip* it. And this the *Papiſts* plainly do in that *Reverence* which they ſhew towards it. For they verily believe it to be *Tranſubſtantiated*, *i. e.* that the ſubſtance of the Bread after the words of Conſecration is paſſed into the Natural Body and Blood of Chriſt: and upon this Belief they fall down to it with a deſign to Reverence it, and to give as much Adoration to it, as they would to Chriſt himſelf were he viſibly preſent. But although this be *their* intent, yet is it in no caſe *ours* in kneeling at the Sacrament. For we kneel not to the

Bread, to give any *Homage* and *Adoration* unto it, as our † *Church* has most expresly declared in the *Rubrick*; so that if any Persons intend any such thing, they must not say they follow the *Church* in it, since in the most earnest and expres words it utterly disclaims, and warns us all against it. But we use kneeling to a quite different end; *viz.* only as it is a *Reverential* * *Humble Posture*, wherein we may very *decently receive Gifts*, and *make Confession of our sins*, and *give Thanks*, and *pour out our Prayers* to *Almighty God*; So that our kneeling is only unto *God*, who is the proper object of our worship, but not at all to the *Bread*, which is never

† *It is hereby declared that thereby* (viz. by kneeling) *no Adoration is intended, or ought to be done, either unto the Sacramental Bread and Wine there bodily received, or unto any Corporal presence of Christs Natural Flesh and Blood. For the Sacramental Bread and Wine remain still in their Natural substances, and therefore may not be adored* (*for that were Idolatry, to be abhor'd of all Faithful Christians*) *And the Natural Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ are in Heaven, and not here; it being against the Truth of Christs Natural Body to be at one time in more places than one.* Rub. at the end of the Commun. Service.

* *Which Order* [of *Kneeling*] *is well meant, for a signification of our Humble and Grateful acknowledgement of the Benefits of Christ therein given to all worthy Receivers.* ib.

never intended to be ſerv'd, nor receives any Homage or Submiſſion by it. This, I ſay, is all we do in kneeling at the Sacrament, as the *Church* requires, and as our own *Conſciences* bear us witneſs, which are the only ſure Judges in this Caſe, ſince they alone do throughly underſtand, and are privy to our own Intents and Purpoſes. And when both our *Church* and *we* do thus openly profeſs, that we *kneel not* to the *Bread*, nor have any intent thereby to worſhip and ſubmit our ſelves to it; there is none ſure will be ſo raſh and unchriſtianly Cenſorious, as to charge us with it. But if any do, they are thereby Guilty, not only of an *open uncharitableneſs*, in imputing the worſt things to us without any juſt Cauſe; but alſo of *great Preſumption* and *high Arrogance*, ſince therein they take upon them to teach us our own thoughts, and to tell us our own Hearts and Intentions better than we can tell our ſelves.

2. If in *kneeling* at the Sacrament we *ſhould have any ſuch intent*, without which there is no *Adoration* paid to it; we *ſhould worſhip it whether we kneel or ſit*; ſo that *their* Mode and *ours* are *equally concerned* in this doubt, and it muſt be own'd on all ſides, that not the *Poſture*, but the *Intent* is to be blamed for it. For when

we deſigne worſhip to any Object, we can give it by a bare *inward Homage* and *ſubmiſſion of the Mind*, without the help of any *outward* act; or, if we would make it a worſhip of the *Body* too, that may be done by *any Poſture* wherein we deſign to expreſs it. It may be done *ſitting*, as well as in a more *humble mode*; for tho' that ſeem to ſhew more of *Familiarity* than *Reſpect*, yet has it ſometimes been uſed for the *Poſture* of *worſhip*. Thus the *Gentiles* worſhipped their *Gods*, as † *Tertullian* tells us, ——*the Nations*, ſays he, *worſhip their Images ſitting*: And thus alſo the *Jews* ſometimes worſhipped in their *Religious Feaſts*, when they ſed upon their *Sacrifices*: for ſo it was plainly in the worſhip of the *Golden Calf*, where, after they had offer'd their *Burnt-offerings* and their *Peace-Offerings*, *they ſate down to eat and to drink upon what they had offer'd*, Exod. 32. 6. So that if any of thoſe that *kneel* are Guilty of worſhipping the Bread, their *kneeling* muſt not be accuſed for it, ſince, when giving worſhip is their intent,

† Cum perinde faciant Nationes adoratis Sigillaribus ſuis reſidendo, vel propterea in nobis reprehendi meretur [viz. *ſitting at Prayers*] quod apud Idola celebratur. *Tertul. de Orat. c.* 12.

† 1 Sam. 9. 13. 22.

tent, they would be Guilty of the ſame thing if they *ſate*; and therefore it is not the Poſture, which were very commendable were it directed unto *God*, but the miſ-applying it to the *Bread*, and uſing it with that *irreligious intent*, which is to bear the blame of it.

As for thoſe then who are afraid to *kneel at the Sacrament*, for fear leſt thereby with the *Papiſts* they ſhould *worſhip the Bread*; my Anſwer in brief is this. To *worſhip the bread* as the *Papiſts* do, is to *kneel down to it*, and to pay Divine *Honour* and *Adoration* to it, becauſe they *believe Chriſt bodily preſent* in it; and *this may be done in any Poſture*, either *ſitting* or *kneeling*, when any Perſons ſo *intend* it; and *without ſuch intent*, *'tis not done by kneeling* in the Holy Sacrament; and *they are beſt able to tell themſelves* whether in Receiving they *intend* any ſuch thing or no, and, if *they ſay they do not*, 'tis *great Arrogance* as well as *Uncharitableneſs* in *others to charge them with it*; and if *they have any ſuch deſign*, they muſt not ſay it is to *comply with our Church*, becauſe it *expreſly declares againſt it*, and *warns them of the danger of it*: If they *worſhip the Bread*, their *kneeling* is *no cauſe* of it; and they may *uſe that Poſture* only to *confeſs their Sins*, and *give Thanks*, and *make Prayers*,

by all which they *worſhip God*, if they are ſo minded; and if ſtill they *will worſhip the Bread by it*, they *go off from the Injunction of the Church, which would deter them from it*: So that their Submiſſion to the Churches Order in this Caſe, can put them in no danger of worſhipping the Bread; and therefore in complying with her, they have no cauſe at all to be afraid of it.

And then as for this Kneeling in the Sacrament being a *Popiſh Rite*, if they mean that *the Papiſts uſe it*, they may call their *own Sitting* a *Popiſh Rite* too, upon the ſame ground, becauſe that alſo is ſometimes uſed by them in receiving. For the *Benedictine Monks*, as * *Didoclavius*, a zealous Aſſerter of the *Sitting Mode*, has obſerved from *Bullinger*, *ſit at the Communion ſometimes*. Nay, ſo doth the *Pope himſelf*, as *William Thomas*, an Eye-witneſs of it, in the Year 1547, ſays the † *Quench-Coal*, in his Hiſtory of *Italy*, plainly teſtifies;

* Hodie in Cathedralibus Eccleſiis & Monaſteriis Benedictinorum, in Die Cœnæ Domini ante Paraſceven, &c. Evangelium Johannis a Diacono publice prælegitur, & dulciſſima illa colloquia Chriſti, quæ abiturus cum Diſcipulis habuit, recitantur: interim ordine diſpoſitis menſis, convivæ aſſident, panem azymum frangentes, &c. *Didoclav. Alt. Damaſc. c.* 10. *p.* 746.

† *Quench-Coal*, p. 22.

teſtifies; and as * *Durandus* alſo clearly affirms; and as the † *Book* of the *Sacred Ceremonies* ſufficiently intimates in one Caſe, *viz.* at the *Coronation of the Emperours*. *Sitting* and *Kneeling* then are *both* equal as to this Point, that the *Papiſts uſe them*: but that need not make us throw them away as *Popiſh Rites*, or be any Diſparagement to *either* of them. For the *Papiſts* have many *harmleſs* things, and many *very good*, as well as many *bad* among them. They have the *Scriptures*, which are never the leſs the *Word of God* becauſe they *read* them; and the *Creed*, and the *Lords Prayer*, which none of us will caſt aſide becauſe they *uſe* them; and *kneel at their Prayers*, which yet we ought not to diſclaim for fear of *ſymbolizing* with them: So that both *Sitting* and *Kneeling*

* --Summus Pontifex ad ſedem aſcendens, ibique conſidens, univerſis cernentibus, majorem partem oblatæ ſuſcipit de Patena quam Subdiaconus apportaverat de Altari, ipſamque Dentibus ſubdividens, unam particulam ejus ſumit, & aliam in Calicem mittit, &c. *Durand. Ration. Divin. Offic. l.* 4. *c.* 54. *Nu.* 4. *p.* 203.

† ---- Imperator retrahens ſe ad partem dextram, ſtat uſque quò Pontifex ad ſedem eminentem communicaturus revertatur, quem Imperator ſequitur. *Lib. Sacr. Cæremon. S. Rom. Eccl. l.* 1. *ſect.* 5. *c.* 3. *p.* 59.

may be *good* things among *us*, tho' both are used by *them* too.

But if by a *Popish Rite*, they mean that it is one of the *Corruptions of Popery*, whereby they have depraved *Christianity*; that is a great Mistake, which has no colour of Reason or Ground at all for it. For Kneeling is not onely a very *innocent*, but a very *decent* Posture wherein to *receive Gifts*, and *make humble Confession of our Sins*, and *put up Prayers* and *Supplications to Almighty God*; all which we are to do in the *Holy Sacrament*. It is probably a much more *Ancient Rite*, and either *it*, or some *other Posture of Reverence* and *Adoration*, which is of the same account with it, was used in the *Communion* long before *Popery*, *i. e.* the *Popish Errours* and *Corruptions*, which are a novel and upstart Religion, had any Footing.

As for this *Objection* then against *Complying* with the Injunction of *Kneeling* in the Sacrament, *viz.* its being a *worshipping the Bread*, and a *Popish Rite*; there is really no weight in it. For they cannot *worship the Bread* in *complying* with the *Church*, since it *forbids* it; nor do any thing that is *truly* and *culpably Popish*, tho' the *Papists* use it, as indeed they do Sitting too, which yet is never the worse for it, because it is no *Corruption of Popery*, but

but either *it*, or ſome *other* Poſture of *Adoration* which is of equal Danger with it, was in uſe in *Chriſtianity* before the *Popiſh Errours* were introduced. So that altho' they cannot ſee Reaſon enough to deſire it, nor would receive Kneeling were another Poſture allowed; yet ſince the Sacrament is not otherwiſe to be had, they may very ſafely and wiſely comply with, and ſubmit to it ſtill.

And thus I have conſidered this *Impediment*, whereby many good Minds, who are ſenſible of the Duty of it, and are otherwiſe very well prepared for it, are yet unhappily kept back from the *Holy Sacrament*. And the Reſult of all is this, That when they ſtay away upon this account, becauſe *they will not kneel in receiving it*, they refrain upon a moſt unjuſtifiable Ground, which will afford them no *Excuſe*, nor ought in any reaſon to be their *Hindrance*. For *Kneeling* is really no *unſuitable*, but a very *decent Poſture*; ſo that if we were left at *liberty* to receive how we would, we might have enough to *juſtifie our ſelves* in making *uſe* of it. And it is *appointed us by our Governours*, whom God commands us to obey in all *lawful* things; ſo that in regard to *their* having *preſcribed* it, every *good Man* among us *ought to obſerve it*. And if neither

ther *Authority* could impose, nor it had any *Reason* from it self to recommend it, but that *Sitting* were on all accounts much *fitter* to be used; yet since in their own ccount *it* may *lawfully* be used too, and is onely a *less decent* Mode, but has no Sin or Offense in it, if they have any earnest desire for the Sacrament, which is not otherwise to be had, for *its sake* they will at least *comply* with it. If they rate things truly, since *Authority* has *injoyned* it, they will see themselves *obliged* to use it; but however, since their Saviour has laid no weight upon it, but accepts a Devout Mind in any Posture, tho' they had rather use another, yet is there nothing to hinder their Compliance and Submission to it: So that there is no just pretence for any, upon this account, to refrain coming to the Sacrament.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of some other Hindrances.

The Contents.

An Account of some other Hindrances. One abstains because the day before he was at a Feast. Another, because his Child is sick, or he himself is lightly indisposed. A third, because his Wife or Husband cannot come along with him to joyn in it. A fourth, because he has a Visit to make, or a Friend come in, who in all civility must be attended. A fifth, because of a Shower of Rain, or a sharp Air abroad, so that he must endure a piercing Blast, or wet his Foot, to go out to it. These are no Excuse from it, but still Men are bound to Communicate. Some Devout Meditations and Prayers to help them in a Worthy Discharge of it. After they have received, they must be careful to make good those holy Vows and Promises which they made to God in the Holy Sacrament.

HAving hitherto consider'd those Pleas which seem to be of most weight in hindring Men from the Sacrament, and

and poſſeſs them either with a *Scruple* that they dare not, or with an *important Reaſon* why they ſhould not chuſe to come to it; before I diſmiſs this Head, I ſhall take notice of ſome *others*, which, tho' of leſs moment, may yet ſeem fit to be conſidered.

Men oft-times give ſuch Reaſons for their Neglect of the Sacrament, as are Reaſons to themſelves for neglecting nothing elſe that is of half that moment. *The Unſeaſonableneſs of the Weather*, the *Sickneſs of a Child*, the *paying a Compliment to a Friend*, or the like, is thought a ſufficient Hindrance from the Communion: Whereas it would not hinder them from any Buſineſs which either *Friendſhip*, their *own Pleaſure*, or their *Profit* requires of them. For how cogent ſoever they may account them in keeping them back from *it*, they would not be with-held by them from purſuing any *Sport*, or from driving an *advantageous Bargain*, or carrying on any *End* or *Intereſt*, or *ſerving their Friend* in any *Buſineſs* or *Affair of moment*. And can any Man now have the Face to give that for a Reaſon to Almighty God, which he would be aſhamed to offer as a Reaſon to any one elſe? Can he expect to excuſe the *Neglect of a weighty Duty* unto *him*, by ſuch trifling

trifling Apologies as would not excuse the *Neglect of a Bargain*, nay of a *Pastime* to *himself*; nor of a *Concern of weight*, or, perhaps, of a *Complement* to his *Companions?* Those Men are surely in a sad Case, who are forced to seek shelter under such thin Pretences; and rather than make such trifling Pleas for any Act of Disobedience, it were by much their wiser course to be wholly silent, and not seek to defend themselves at all.

When these Pleas are made then, there is no Excuse in them. And indeed they would not be made by any Men, if once they were convinced how much it is both their *Duty* and their *Interest* to come to the Communion. For when they are detained by such frivolous Reasons as would not either be urged or admitted in excuse for any other Business; they shew onely their great Indifference to it, and how they esteem it less than any other Matters: and this they could not do, if they held it either as a valuable Privilege, or as a Point of Conscience. The best way therefore to remove these Hindrances from the Sacrament, is to possess Men with a Belief that God has peremptorily injoyn'd it, and that 'tis infinitely their own Interest and high Privilege to be admitted to it. And having shew'd these very

very largely in the *Second* Part, I shall refer the *Reader* unto that, as a very likely way, not onely to answer *these*, but also to prevent all *other* such like Pleas against it.

But that such Persons as are serious in these Hindrances, may not think themselves slighted, besides this *general* Answer, I shall say something to the *Particulars*.

1. *One* keeps away from the Sacrament because *the day before* either *he himself has made a Feast*, or *has been treated by his Neighbour at a Noble Entertainment*. But why, I pray, must this excuse it? For if at the Feast he was guilty of any *incapacitating Fault*, or any ways *intemperate*; 'tis not the *Feast*, but such *Offence* or *Intemperance* which is to be alledg'd for it. But if the Entertainment was *Friendly* in the *Design*, *Temperate* at the *Table*, and every way *harmless* and *charitable*, hurting no Man's *Fame*, nor disturbing any Man's *Quiet* in the Conversation; wherein was his Lord offended, or his Soul unfitted by it? The *Primitive Christians* received it as a Friendly Treat, for in those days their *Love-Feasts* always went along with it; so that an Hospitable Entertainment the day *before*, yea or the *same* day, doth not unfit Men to Communicate; but if

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in all things else they are duely qualified, they may worthily receive still.

2. *Another* abstains from this Holy Feast because *his Child is sick*, or because *he has taken Cold himself*, or *has some akeing in his Head*, or *is otherwise lightly indisposed.* But what if his *Child is sick?* Doth he attend it? Or is it advisable for him to be so far disturbed at it, till his Mind is unfit for those Religious Tempers which he is to exercise at the Holy Sacrament? Perhaps his Child fares the worse because of some Sin that he has committed; and will he not then instantly repent of it, and come to the Lord's Table, there to have his Pardon seal'd, that so this Load being taken off, it might be eased by it? But whether that be so or no, if he has any sense of Religion either in his *Childs* Case or his own, he will be earnestly desirous to make God his *Physician*, and call out to him for help; and that he cannot do so effectually, or prevail in it so certainly at any other time, as I have shewed, as in the Holy Sacrament. For God is never more inclined to hear us, nor are we ever more likely to have our Prayers granted for any thing that he sees fit for us, than when we send them up along with this Solemn Commemoration of our Saviours Death, which is the only Argument

ment that has Authority and Power with him, to obtain any thing on our behalf. So that if a wise man longs to have his Child recovered, he cannot do a more unwise thing, than either to grieve so far till he is *unfitted* for this Feast, or, when he might be fit for it, to *neglect* it; since his Prayers there would a be most *probable* and *prudent* course to obtain it.

And then as for his *own indisposition*, if indeed it has brought upon him such *heavineſs* as unfits him for any Spiritual Act, or if it is in that Degree, that 'tis not *safe* for him to stir abroad with it; God prefers *Natural* and *Essential Duties* before *Positive Institutions*, and *Mercy* before *Sacrifice*, so that it will be a just excuse for it. But if it cannot hinder him from looking after business, and going among his Neighbours, or venturing out upon any appearance of doing either himself or his Friend a kindness; why must it excuse him from attending upon God, and doing him this Service; except that be thought sufficient to excuse our attendance upon him which excuses nothing else, which is a thing, I presume, they would be loth to own, who stay away by reason of this hindrance.

2. *Some* again refrain the Holy Sacrament, because *their Wife*, or *Husband*

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cannot bear them Company, and join in it. One of them is either *accidentally prevented* that they *cannot*, or *ſinfully negligent* and *unprepared* that they *will* not come to it; and therefore in Complyance and for Companies ſake the other alſo keeps away at preſent, and defers it to another time when both together can partake of it.

This I think is a *popular*, but it is a very *weak* excuſe. For the receiving the Communion is an indiſpenſable Duty, concerning which every Perſon muſt give account of *themſelves* unto Almighty God; ſo that one near Relation can no more talk of neglecting *it* for the others ſake, than of neglecting to ſay their *Prayers* and *ſerve God* becauſe the other doth it not, or of being *irreligious* to ſymbolize with ſome dear Friends, and *caſting away* their *precious Souls* out of *Complement*. Nay, if he had not thus *injoyn'd*, but only *Friendly invited* us to Communicate; yet would it be a very *rude* and *diſobliging* thing to refuſe his Invitation upon this account, becauſe ſome others, who are very dear to us, have not either the *opportunity*, or *good manners* to accept it. For if an *Husband* or a *Wife* will not receive, unleſs the *other* alſo will conſent to joyn it; it is a ſign they come not

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ſo much for their *Lords*, as for *each others* ſake, ſo that *they* and not their *Saviour* have the Service and the Honour of it: and this is an odd account for any man to give to Chriſt of his neglecting this Feaſt, when he is moſt affectionately and earneſtly invited to it.

When any Perſons ſtay away from the Sacrament then, becauſe they cannot have their Boſom-Friend to joyn in it: they are Guilty of a *great ſin*, ſince they are bound to it whether the other come or not, and paſs a *great affront* and *diſhonour* upon their Lord; ſo that this is far from having any excuſe in it. Nay, inſtead of being a Reaſon why they ſhould abſtain from it, the neglect of one dear Relation lays a greater *obligation* on the other to Communicate. For when one cannot come, ſo that there muſt be a defect on that part, that is *too much* already ſince neither ought to be wanting in it; and therefore there is the *more need* the other ſhould receive, not only to ſhew their *own Duty* in it, but alſo to *ſupply their Friends defect* as well as they can, and make amends for it.

4. A *Fourth* abſents himſelf from this Holy Feaſt, becauſe *that day he is to viſit a Friend abroad*, or *has a Friend accidentally come in to dine with him, who muſt in all Civility be attended.* But

But why must our Respects to our Saviour and our other Friends be made thus to *interfere*, so that *one* must needs be a Temptation to omit the *other*? How comes it, that of all the days in the month we fix upon that for visiting or entertaining of our Friends, when our Blessed Lord invites us to his Table there to entertain us? Or if by accident a Friend then breaks in upon us, why must that detain us when Christ calls us? Is it any part of his Friendship to make us disobey our Lord, or to put us by embracing this high honour and most advantageous opportunity when 'tis offer'd? Or if he be Gods Friend too as well as ours, is it not very fit that he should go also and joyn with us? When to Communicate is a Duty in both of us, is it any wise Reasonable that he should make us stay away, and not go himself along with us? But if it happen that a Friend who is *unwilling to Communicate* falls in to be entertained, or a visit at that time would be expected: Since our Saviour and they cannot be attended too, which ought in Reason to be prefer'd? Is there any to whom we owe more Respect and Observance, than we do to Christ Jesus? should we Affect the Company, or Court the Conversation of any Person, more than his? Are there

there any who ought more highly to be valued by us, or have better deserv'd of us, or whom we should study more to make our Friend, than him who has gain'd us Eternal Life, and that by laying down his own Hearts Blood for the Purchase? When more *Honourable Persons*, or *better Friends* invite us, let us turn our backs upon his Table, and pay *them* Attendance: but since he can have no Competitors in this Case, where is the *Justice*, the *Honour* and *Respect* to him, when this is given as the Reason of our Absence?

5. A *Fifth* neglects the Holy Sacrament, because of *a shower of Rain*, or *a sharp Air abroad*; *so that he must indure a piercing blast*, or *wet his Foot if he goes out in it*.

But is he thus tender of himself in any other matters? and would these dreadful Scare-Crows put him by any other Concerns which fright him from this Ordinance? If they stood in the way of his *Pleasures*, would he or frain them? If they lay between him and his *worldly Interests*, would he be discouraged by them? If they met him in the way as he were going to *do his Friend a kindness*, would they cause him to turn back again? Though they would not *just fie* it, yet when they hinder him from these and such

ſuch like matters, they may with more *colour be pleaded* in excuſe of his abſence from the *Lords Supper*. But are not men much at a Loſs for excuſes to ſhift off this Duty, when ſuch as this, ſo full of palpable Contempt and a careleſs Spirit, muſt ſerve their turn, and be thought ſufficient? And have not we an hard task to *Conduct them on to Eternal happineſs*, which muſt put them upon *Fighting* and *Striving*, and *giving all Diligence*, and *denying themſelves*, and *taking up the Croſs*, and *plucking out right Eyes*, and *cutting off right Hands*, &c. when they ſtumble thus at *Straws*, and are beat back by the force of *every Feather* which is blown in their Faces; and ſuch trifles as theſe can diſcourage their going on in the moſt weighty Duties, and make them recoyl again upon our Hands?

As for all theſe Excuſes then, which *careleſs* men, who make *no Conſcience* of the Sacrament, give for their Abſence from it; they will not ſtand them in any ſtead, nay, they are ſuch as no wiſe man dare own when once they are examined. They ſhew nothing elſe, but the *diſ-regard men* have of Chriſt, their *unaffectedneſs* with all that he has done and ſuffered, their *abſolute indifference* to have it *remembred*, and their *utter Contempt*

tempt of this Duty which he has commanded them. They are a good Evidence of their own *careleſs*, *undutiful*, and *irreverent* mind, and manifeſt how little they ſet by their Bleſſed Lord; ſo that the urging of them is a ready way to give *more offence*, but not to make any *excuſe* at all.

And thus I have done with all thoſe *Pleas*, which are wont, I think, moſt *generally* to *keep men from the Communion*, and would be moſt apt to hinder thoſe things which I have ſaid about the *Duty* and *Advantage* of it in the *ſecond* part, from having their due effect upon them. Among theſe there are ſome, perhaps, may ſeem to be *little* objections; but little as they are, they are an hindrance to ſome minds; and ſince it is not below them to ſtop at them, I am far from thinking it too trivial and low a thing for me to anſwer them. And upon the whole matter it appears, that to Communicate is a *great Duty*, and a *great benefit*, and that none of thoſe *Pleas* which are ordinarily urged for it, can in any juſt ſort *excuſe* their *neglect* of it. For neither their *unworthineſs to partake in it*, nor the danger of *Damnation threatned to every unworthy Communicant*, nor the *Fear of breaking that promiſe of New Life which is made in it*, nor

nor the *apprehended Difficulty* and *want of leisure to prepare for it*, nor their *being unbettered and unimproved by it*, nor the *want of that Charity which is to be profess'd at it*, nor the *having some Enemies, after all their Endeavours for Reconciliation, unreconciled*, nor the *seeming presumption of joyning in it*, nor the *Customary Absence of many good People from it*, nor the *Admittance of Unworthy Receivers to it*, nor the *Imposition of Kneeling at it*: neither *these*, I say, nor any *other* Impediment whereby Men are apt to excuse it to their own Minds, can justifie and bear them out in absenting themselves when they are invited. No *ill* Man *can be excused*, and no *good* Man *need* to be *hindred* by them; so that every Man, as he tenders our Blessed Lord's Command, and his own Souls-Interest, must be careful reverently and devoutly to partake in this Holy Feast, when he has an Opportunity, and is called so to do.

And now I have gone thro' all those *Particulars* which I proposed at *first*, and which I thought most proper to be insisted on to ingage Men to a *Worthy Reception* of the Holy Sacrament. I have shewn what is the *meaning of Eating* and *Drinking in this Feast*, and *wherein lies the Worthiness of doing it*, and *what strict Ob-*

ligations we have to it, and *how great Benefits we are like to receive by it*, and *answered those Pleas which are most generally given out to excuse the Neglect of it*; and this with all *honest* Minds, who are *desirous* and *free* to *hear*, and will have the *patience* to *consider*, may seem sufficient to inforce a due Attendance on it. And when once Men are so disposed, and seriously resolv'd to communicate, I shall add a few things to assist them in a right Discharge of it, and so conclude this Subject.

When we come to the Holy Sacrament, to *commemorate the Death* of our *Bleeding Lord*, whose *Body* there is represented as *broken*, and his most precious *Blood* as *shed*, on our account; we are to shew forth an *affectionate* and *hearty Thankfulness* for so invaluable a Kindness, and an *intire Resignation of our selves to his Use*, and *Repentance of all our Sins*, fully purposing to amend them all thenceforwards, and an *universal Peace* and *Charity towards all our Neighbours*; all which we must excite in our own Souls by due Considerations.

1. We must shew forth an *affectionate* and *hearty Thankfulness for so invaluable a Kindness*. And what Soul can be slow to pay this, who considers how *infinitely our dear Lord has deserved of us?* For he has got

got us the moſt *precious* and *glorious* things which Heaven it ſelf could afford, that *all our Sins* ſhould be *freely pardoned*, and that the *Holy Ghoſt*, that *Immenſe*, *Eternal*, and *All-ſufficient Spirit*, ſhould come in at all times to our *help*, and that we ſhould be in no leſs Quality than the *Sons of God*, and *Heirs of a Kingdom*, who are aſſured of *eternal Joys* and *Glories* in another World: And ought not *Gifts* ſo *auguſt* and *ſuperlatively excellent* to be moſt *affectionately acknowledged*? He has bought all theſe, to beſtow upon us, at the *deareſt Rate*, not onely taking the moſt *unwearied Pains*, but alſo paying the *higheſt Price*, and *laying down his own moſt precious Blood for the Purchaſe*. And muſt not ſuch *aſtoniſhing Kindneſs*, which was affrighted by no Hazards, nor ſtopt at any Difficulties, nor declined any Sufferings, not the Suffering of Death it ſelf, for our ſakes, be always held in a moſt *thankful Remembrance*? And in all this he had no *Ends of his own* to ſerve of us, but was led on purely by the Pleaſure he takes in our Happineſs; he was not *won by our Deſerts*; for, alas! we were his *profeſt Enemies*, who had nothing to ſhew but higheſt Provocations; he was not *wearied* out with the *importunity of our Intreaties*, for it came, as *undeſerv'd*, ſo altogether *unaſk'd*,

ask'd, whatsoever he did for us: he was not *moved* by the *Mediation of Friends*; for whom, alas! had we to *intercede* for us? And shall not such *amazing Love* and *Goodness*, so *frankly* shew'd, without any Eye at *Self-ends* or *Private Interests*, without *Intreaties* or *Deserts*, nay, in spite of all *Discouragements* and *highest Provocations*, be entertain'd with *greatest Joy* and *grateful Acclamations?* He has been an *infinitely endearing* and *entire Friend* to us, without any Inducement but his own most *generous Kindness*, and *against all Discouragements*, and *beyond all Bounds*, and *under the most frightful Hazards*, and *at the highest Expences*, giving his *own Soul* even to *Death*, for a Ransom to redeem *ours*: And whensoever we hear or think of this, I am confident it will not be difficult for any of us to embrace him with Hearts full of *Love* and *high Desires*, and pay him most *intire Thanks*, and burst out into *Songs of Praise*, and find it a most *joyful Business* so to do.

What am I, my dear Lord, will a devout Mind then say, *that thou shouldest leave the Right-hand of God, and come to visit me? Hadst thou no Ease in thy own Breast, so long as I lay plunged in Misery? And couldst not thou be Happy in Heaven, nor enjoy thy self amidst all the Joys and Glories*

Glories of that Bliſsful Place, unleſs I were there too to bear thee Company? How canſt thou, being ſo highly exalted, and the Eternal Son of God, to have any Affectionate Concern at all for me? Was not I a deformed, polluted Wretch, and thy profeſt Enemy? And were not either of theſe enough to turn away thy Face from me? But if, notwithſtanding all this, thy overflowing Goodneſs would put thee upon doing ſomething for my ſake, why muſt thou come thy ſelf upon the Earth, nay, come to bleed and die, to Redeem me? Am I dearer to thee than thy own Life, that thou ſhouldeſt part with it to ſave me? Doſt thou love me better than thou loveſt thy ſelf, that thou wilt ſhed the laſt Drop of thy own Hearts Blood to make me happy? Bleſſed Jeſus! how unſathomable is thy Grace, and what an unſearchable Depth of Love is this which thou haſt opened to us! O how happy do I think my ſelf in it, and how doth my Heart rejoyce at the Remembrance of it! Lord! I love thee dearly, and long to love thee more. Would I had the Heart of a Seraphin, that I might be all over Love, and neither wiſh nor think of any thing beſides thee. Would I could feel my Soul affected to that degree which I deſire, and thou infinitely deſerveſt of me. I wiſh no greater Pleaſure, than to be found perfect in thy Love, and to have thee ſo dear

unto me, that I can contemn all the gilded Vanities and Allurements of the World at the thoughts of thee. O! do thou fill me with an Affection full and absolute, like thine own, that I may love thee infinitely, as I am beloved by thee! Poſſeſs me with ſuch a Senſe of thy Love, and ſuch Thankfulneſs for all thy Favours, as is worthy of thee; tho' ſhould I offer the utmoſt Acknowledgments which the moſt affected and enlarged Heart can pay, I ſhould not give the thouſandth part of what I owe thee. Let all the Angels adore thy glorious Goodneſs, and all the Sons of Men, ſo long as they have a Tongue to ſpeak, ſet forth thy Noble Praiſe: for thou, O ſweeteſt Jeſu, *art the Son of the Bleſſed, the Joy and Glory of the World, the Lamb of God, and the Saviour of Mankind, who waſt ſlain for our ſakes, and art alive again, and ſitteſt now for ever at the Right-hand of Power, in the Glory of the Father, that Angels may ſubmit to thee, and all the World may worſhip thee, ſing of thee, and praiſe thy Goodneſs, Power, and Glory, to all Eternity.*

2. We muſt ſhew our ſelves *reconciled to all who have any ways offended us*, and *that we are in Peace* and *Charity with all Perſons.* And this we ſhall not think much to do, if we conſider how highly our *dear Lord is concern'd for them*, and how

how *earneſtly he ſues in behalf of them*; for then we ſhall be readily brought to it on *his* account, tho we might be more averſe to it on *their own*. He has loved them ſo well, as to ſhed his *precious Blood* for them; and can *we* find in our Hearts to *hurt* any Perſon, when we ſee *him* giving his own Life to *ſave* him? He owns them as his *Friends* and *Brethren*; and is not that enough to make us kind, to ſee that he is ſo near *akin* to them? He has made them *Members* of his *Body*, and thereby Parts of his own ſelf; and can we ſtudy Revenge againſt *them*, when *he* comes in at laſt to bear the ſtroke, and is reach'd in ſo doing? He becomes a *Petitioner* to us in *their behalf*, and intreats us by vertue of all that he has done to be Friends again; and can we have the face to deny him, who has ſo infinitely obliged us, and ought to command us in every thing? Shall we refuſe ſo ſmall a Suit to him, who died for us? or ſtick to throw away a ſinful Reſentment for his ſake, who has parted with his own Hearts Blood for ours? Tho' they are moſt unworthy to be pardoned, yet is he moſt worthy of it; ſo that when he intreats, we muſt not be backward in it. Nay, we ſtand daily in a *thouſand* times more need of *his Pardon*, than they do of *ours*; ſo

that we block up the way to our own Forgiveneſs, if we refuſe it. For what if they have *injured* us? Have we been altogether innocent, and have offered him no Injuries? What if they have moſt *ungratefully abuſed* us, after they had received the moſt endearing Kindneſſes? have we been duely thankful unto him, and never offended againſt all his Mercies? Do not we owe him * *Ten thouſand Talents?* whereas their Debt to us is but a Trifle of an *hundred Pence?* And ſince we are daily asking *him* the Forgiveneſs of theſe *vaſt Sums*, can we at the ſame time ſtick at his Inſtance to remit theſe *ſmaller Matters* to *our Neighbours?* Have we the Face to ask Pardon, whilſt we have not the Heart to grant it? Or can we hope that Chriſt ſhould give it us, for the moſt heinous Sins, at our Requeſt, when we deny it to our Brother, for the ſmalleſt Treſpaſſes, at his? Or rather, ſince he moſt frankly forgives us, and that too without upbraiding us, ſhall not both our own *Neceſſity*, and the *Example of his Mercy*, engage us to forgive our offending Neighbour alſo?

* Mat. 18.24, 28.

Lo! here, my Bleſſed Saviour, will a Devout Heart then ſay, *how I caſt by all*

angry

angry Thoughts, and am Friends with all the World as thou requireſt me! They ſhall all be dear to me, becauſe I ſee they are ſo to thee, who haſt given thine own Life for their Ranſom. Thou owneſt them all as thy Brethren, and therefore they ſhall evermore be mine; for I deſire to have the ſame Friends, and to go along with thee in every Relation. No Member of thine whom before I had never ſeen ſhall ever be a Stranger to me, but I will embrace him as a part of my own Body. Nay, even my bittereſt Enemies ſhall have no hatred, or hard uſage at my hands, but I am Friends with all the World ſince thou wilt have it ſo. Shall not I forgive other men, who am undone my ſelf unleſs I be forgiven? Shall not I have pity on their Souls, as thou, Bleſſed Jeſus, haſt on mine; and freely Pardon them, when thou becomeſt their Advocate to ſue and intercede for them? O! my Deareſt Saviour, I do from my heart forgive them, and will never yield to return their Injuries or Unkindneſſes upon them. Nay, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, and that by thy own moſt precious Blood, that thou wouldeſt forgive them alſo. Give them Grace to Repent of what they have done, and impute not their Treſpaſſes unto them, but receive them, I earneſtly intreat thee, into thy Favour, as here I do truly and unfeignedly into mine. Hear

me, O Bleſſed Jeſu! both for my ſelf and them, that we may all be one with thee, and among our ſelves, being united to thee by a Spirit of Holineſs, and to each other by a Spirit of mutual Charity and Brotherly-kindneſs, that ſo all the World may know we are thy Diſciples by that Spirit of Love which thou haſt given us.

3. We muſt *Reſign our ſelves up to our Saviours uſe, and Repent truly of all our ſins, promiſing him Faithfully that we will amend them all thenceforwards.*

We muſt *Reſign our ſelves up to our Saviours uſe*, that *he may diſpoſe of us as he pleaſes.* And what man can ſtick at this, who conſiders that he has *bought* us, and would put us to *no uſe* but what is *infinitely* for our *own Advantage*? Has any Perſon a better claim to us, than he who bought us with his Blood, and gave his own Life for the Purchaſe? Should not he have the benefit of all our Service, who has paid ſo dear for it, by dying himſelf inſtead of us? But if we were at Liberty, and he had no Power over us; is there any better way to diſpoſe of our ſelves, or could we deſire to be in other hands rather than in his? Can we hope for more Wiſdom in any one to direct, or more Power to bring our Happineſs about, than in him who knows

and

and governs all things? Durſt we truſt more to the Faithfulneſs and Affection of any Heart, than of that which dyed for us? Or can we think our ſelves happier in any Hands than his, who is in all things ſtudious of our Advantage? For our Bleſſed Lord ſeeks no other ends by us, but our own Eternal Happineſs; he impoſes no Duties on our Conſciences, but what he has done himſelf before us, nay, what, had we the underſtanding to diſcern it, we ſhould all have impoſed upon our ſelves: So that in committing our ſelves to his Conduct, we do not give but ſeek a Benefit; and diſpoſe of our ſelves in that way which is incomparably our higheſt Intereſt. We are abſolutely his own Right, and 'tis infinitely our own Intereſt to be wholly given up to him, and govern'd according to his liking; and therefore every conſiderate man will freely reſign his Heart to Chriſt, and never ſuffer the World, or his own Luſts to pull it back again.

"Come then, my Dear and Rightful "Lord, will a poor Soul ſay, and take "Poſſeſſion of me. Thou haſt bought "me with thine own Blood, a ſtrange "Price for ſo deſpicable a Purchaſe; and "here I come in all Humility to preſent "thee with what thou haſt ſo dearly got;

and

" and without all reſerve to give up my
" ſelf unto thee. I know, O Lord, I
" am a Deformed, and Polluted Crea-
" ture, moſt unworthy to be offer'd to
" ſo excellent a Majeſty. But gladly
" would I be thine that thou may'ſt make
" me better, and ſo adorn me with thy
" Grace that I may be fitted for thy ſelf,
" and therefore I earneſtly beſeech thee
" to accept me. I humbly beg to be de-
" livered from my ſelf, for I am my
" own moſt mortal Enemy. O! that
" thou wouldeſt give thine Holy Spirit
" Power over me, and not let my own
" Corrupt will any longer govern me,
" nor my falſe heart any more deceive
" me, nor my unbridled Paſſions any
" more to reign in me, which alas! have
" tyrannized too long already! O! that
" thou wouldſt purge my underſtanding
" from all fooliſh Principles, and all dark-
" neſs and Ignorance of Holy Things; and
" cure my will and affections of all their
" ſtubbornneſs, and oppoſition to thy
" Laws; that thou wouldeſt firſt take
" them as thine own Propriety, and
" then fit them for their Maſters uſe,
" that I may never hereafter live to my
" ſelf, but unto thy Glory! wilt thou
" throw back a Soul that would hang it
" ſelf upon thee? wilt thou diſdain an

Heart

"Heart that is desirous after thee, and "would fain be no longer its own, but "thine, that thou mightest use it as it "may best serve and honour thee? O "Blessed *Jesu*! do not reject it, for it is "the Purchase of thy Blood. Let not all "that be thrown away which thou hast "already done for it, for want of thy "further Care and Conduct of it. Ac- "cept me, Good Lord, who here un- "feignedly devote my self unto thee, "that both my Soul and Body, and all I "have, may be employed as thou seest "fit to order me. I am nothing, I have "nothing, and I desire nothing but to be "with thee, to be filled with thy Grace, "and obey thee perfectly; that so I "may have nothing of my self, but do "all things thro' Christ dwelling in me.

And when we thus *Resign our selves* to our Saviour's Use, we must *heartily repent of all our Sins, faithfully promising never more to yield to them*, but to *amend them all thenceforwards*. To Repent *particularly* of all our Sins, we must first *discover* them, by taking some *Catalogue* of *Christian Duties*, and examining our own Hearts at every one, Whether we have consented to transgress them? And where we find we have, there we must

bemoan

bemoan our ſelves, and *fully reſolve*, That if God will be pleaſed to pardon what is *paſt*, we will never *yield* to do the like again. And what Man will not thus ſtedfaſtly reſolve to *leave* all his Sins, that has the patience to conſider what will be the *End of his Continuance* in them? For by that we ſhall *infinitely offend our Saviour Chriſt*, who gave his own Life for ours, and whom therefore we are bound to pleaſe above all Perſons; we ſhall *certainly loſe the Joys of Heaven*, and *Eternal Happineſs*, a Loſs which the whole World put together cannot recompence; we ſhall *unavoidably be doomed to Hell-fire* and *Eternal Torments*, which is the utmoſt heighth of Miſery that can poſſibly befal us. This will infallibly be the Effect of our *Perſeverance* in any Sins we find our ſelves guilty of. And now let us ask our own Souls, Whether we love them ſo well, that we will *endure all this*, rather than *forego* them? Shall I prize my Sin to that degree, as for its ſake to act deſpite to my deareſt Lord, who died for me? Muſt it be dearer to me than his Love, that I ſhould diſhonour and offend him whenſoever it bids me? Is this the Return I make to my truſt, deareſt Friend, to ſide with his profeſſed Enemy? Is this my Thankfulneſs for all his Kindneſs,

Kindneſs, to ſtick to a Luſt that aims at nothing but my Deſtruction, rather than to him who gave his own Life to ſave mine? Thou loveſt it dearly, O my Soul; but canſt thou value it at ſuch a Rate, as to part with Everlaſting Life for it? Hadſt thou rather have it, than enjoy the Face of God, and be for ever Happy? Art thou content, for the ſhort and unſatiſfying Pleaſures it affords, to loſe all the Joys and Glories of a Bleſſed Eternity? Wilt thou die ſooner than be divorced from it? and accompany it even into the Flames of Hell, and the midſt of Eternal Torment? God forbid, will every Man ſay whoſe Heart is thus particularly poſed, that ever I ſhould be ſo deſperately mad, and unaccountably wicked. I cannot *deſpite ſo dear a Lord*, or *throw away the Eternal Joys of the Heavenly State*, or *endure the Smart of Hell*, and the *inſupportable Load* of *Everlaſting Torment*. No Man can bear it, and I ſtand amazed to think of it: And therefore ſince this will be the Effect of my wicked ways, I am reſolved from this Moment to renounce them, and by the help of God will never return to them any more.

Thus let the *Drunkard* think with himſelf on his *Cups*, the *Swearer* on his *Oaths*, the *unjuſt Man* on his *unlawful Gain*, the

Contentious

Contentious on his *Quarrels*, the *unclean* Person on his *Fornication* and *forbidden Pleasures*, the *Revengeful* Man on his *spiteful Carriage*, the *Slanderer* and *Evil-speaker* on his *reproachful Words*, *Back-bitings*, and *Defamations*, and every *other Sinner* on his *particular Sins*: and when they seriously consider that *this Saviour must be lost*, *this Happiness of Heaven forfeited*, and *this eternal Anguish* and *Extremity of Pain endured*, if they persist in it; they will instantly *resolve to forsake it*, and never yield to be guilty of it again.

* *This may be used as a* Penitential Confession *of our Sins after Self-examination.*

* "O Blessed Lamb of God, who "hast redeem'd me with "thy Blood, *will every* "*Contrite Heart then cry* "*out*, I am utterly ashamed to look thee "in the Face, considering all the cruel "Usage I have brought "upon thee. †I scarce "know how to think of "Feasting on thy precious Blood, now I am "most earnestly invited "to it, since mine own Sins have shed it. "I am, alas! a most polluted Creature, "who have daily offended, in Thought, "Word, and Deed, against thy Divine "Majesty.

† *This Sentence may be omitted, when this Confession is not before a Sacrament.*

"Majesty. My * Pride, "and contempt of God, "and Sensual Lusts, and "Covetous Desires, and "uncharitable Practices, have cried aloud "for Vengeance on me, and that Cry "would not be silenced, unless thou my "dearest Saviour wouldst die in stead of "me. Of all these Offences I am guil-"ty, and the horrour of that Guilt "would fright me from thee, were it not "that thou freely callest me to accept of "Mercy. I come, Lord, in obedience to "thy Word, and with an humble and a "penitent Heart most earnestly entreat "thee to have pity on me. I am sensi-"ble of these, and all my Errours, and "utterly ashamed that ever I committed "them. I am weary of them, and fully "purposed by thy Grace to become a "New Man, or else I durst not ask to be "forgiven. My Heart shall never more "joyn with them, nor will I ever here-"after yield to live in such ungrateful "and wicked ways again. They nail'd "thy tender Hands and Feet to the ac-"cursed Tree, and thrust the Spear in-"to thy Side; and can I then endure to "see, or any longer side with them? "They made God, who is the Author of "all I have and hope to enjoy, my utter "Enemy;

* *Here mention your particular Sins.*

"Enemy; and shall I then be still a
"Friend to them? They would bring
"me to eternal Destruction both of
"Body and Soul; and whilst I consider
"this, is it possible I should have any
"more to do with them? No, Blessed
"Lord, I hate them, and am utterly re-
"solved from this time forth for ever to
"abandon them. They have been the
"Shame of my Life, and are now the
"Sorrow of my Heart, as, alas! when
"thou enduredst such Anguish for them
"on the Cross, once they were of thine.
"I loath my self by reason of them, and
"will never consent any more to live in
"them; and with an humble and a con-
"trite Heart beseech my Heavenly Fa-
"ther, that thro' the Merits of thy
"Blood I may be forgiven. And wilt
"not thou, O God, who sentest to seek
"after me whilst I was an open Rebel,
"now meet me graciously, as thou didst
"the Prodigal Son, when I return again
"to my Duty? Wilt not thou, my sweet-
"est Saviour, who diedst for me whilst
"I was thine unrelenting Foe, now inter-
"cede for me, when I come to serve
"thee? O speak Peace unto my poor
"Heart, and let me know and feel that
"thou forgivest me! Send thy Holy
"Spirit to take possession of it, to keep

"it

"it true unto thy ſelf, that it may never "more ſtart back from thee. Thou "haſt promiſed thy Grace to thoſe that "ask it, and endeavour in expectation "of it: O! I deſire it, and will do what "I can to be aſſiſted by it; and there- "fore humbly hope this Promiſe ſhall be "made good unto thy Servant. What- "ſoever thou doeſt in other things, de- "ny me not this Grace, O Heavenly Fa- "ther, for *Jeſus*'s ſake, who is infinitely "dear to thee, and who died for me. "*Amen.*

Thus may we *Diſcharge* the Duties of this Feaſt, and *excite* and *actuate* in our own minds that *Faith*, and *Thankfullneſs*, and *Charity*, and *Reſignation*, and *Repentance*, which are to render us *fit* and *worthy* of it. If any are deſtitute of other helps, they may make uſe of theſe Meditations and Prayers to affect their own Hearts, and to ſhew forth theſe Virtues of worthy Receivers. They will not always find room for *all* theſe Devotions whilſt the Sacrament is Adminiſtring; but they may go thro' with all of them before they come, for then they may allot what ſpace they pleaſe for them; and make uſe of ſuch of them as the time allows when they are receiving. And for

a more actual adorning of their Souls with them at that time, whilſt the *Miniſter* himſelf, or *others* before them are Receiving, they may expreſs them all in one *Continued Devotion*, by lifting up their Hearts to God in the words following.

"O Bleſſed Jeſu! who gaveſt thy ſelf "to die for my ſake; how near "have I lain to thy kind heart, when "the precious Blood that ſtreamed "thence was not ſo dear to it! I am "utterly aſhamed of my ſelf, that ever "I ſhould put thee to part with ſuch a "price, and to endure ſuch exceeding "ſmart and tortures to befriend me. I "bluſh to think of it, and abhor my ſins "which brought thee to it. But ſince my "need required, and thy Boundleſs Love "would make thee undergo what thou "didſt, in the utmoſt thankfulneſs of an "humble heart, I gladly accept the in-"eſtimable benefit; for which I love "thee moſt Affectionately, and will ſerve "thee moſt Faithfully, and praiſe thee "moſt joyfully, evermore extolling thy "boundleſs Goodneſs and glorious Ex-"cellencies, and endeavouring that all "others may do ſo too.

"Thou haſt Bought me with thy "Blood;

" Blood; and here with an unfeigned " Heart I give up my Soul and Body, " my Goods, and all I have to be em- " ploy'd in thy Service, and disposed of " as thy Providence shall order me. " Take Possession of me by thy Spi- " rit, that my Body may always be the " Temple of the Holy Ghost, my Soul " and all its Faculties intirely Devoted " to thy Behoof and Interest, and all " my worldly Goods acquired so inno- " cently, injoyed so thankfully, spent so " temperately, and laid out so charita- " bly as becomes thy Faithful Steward. " I will not hence forward call any things " my own when once my Lord has need " of them, I freely resign all up unto thee, " since thou hast paid so dear for me.

" I have grievously offended thee by " many sins, particularly " by † &c. I am per- " fectly asham'd of them, " and sorry at my heart " that ever I committed " them, and would never do it were they " to do again; and faithfully promise, " that wittingly I will never more yield " to them; and humbly beg, that for " Christ's sake, in whom thou offerest " Pardon to every penitent Heart, thou " wouldst forgive them.

† *Here name such Sins as you know your selves most guilty of.*

" Thou

"Thou haſt purchaſed the Holy Spi-
"rit for all thoſe who are ready to la-
"bour in an Holy Life, and take pains
"with it; and offereſt him to all
"ſuch induſtrious Souls in this Sacra-
"ment. I deſire, O Lord, to amend all
"theſe Sins which I have here acknow-
"ledged; I am fully bent upon it, and
"will endeavour what I can towards
"it, and depend upon thy Grace and
"Aid to carry me through it: Be it un-
"to thy Servant according to thy Word.

"I am at Peace, O Lord, with all
"Perſons, and forgive all Offenders
"againſt me, as I expect Forgiveneſs of
"my own Offences at thy Hands, and
"am fully reſolved to be kind to all the
"World, but eſpecially to all the Mem-
"bers of thy Myſtical Body, for thy
"ſake, that by theſe Returns of Chari-
"ty I may in ſome ſort anſwer that Infi-
"nite Love and Kindneſs I receive from
"thee.

"Thy Blood, O Bleſſed *Jeſus*, has
"procured; and thou, Holy Father, for
"Chriſt's ſake, haſt promiſed, Pardon of
"any Sin to every one who repents of
"it, and the Aſſiſtance of thy Spirit to
"every one that endeavours with it, and
"Eternal Life to all that are entirely
"Obedient; and calleſt us to receive

"Aſſurance

" Assurance that thou art still of the same
" mind, and wilt make all this good, in
" this Holy Sacrament. Lord, I hearti-
" ly repent me of all my Sins, for
" Christ's sake do thou pardon me; I am
" fully resolved to shew Care, and to la-
" bour in the Amendment of all my
" Faults, let thy Grace and Holy Spirit
" come in to assist and enable me; I am
" stedfastly purposed to keep thy Com-
" mandments, do thou then graciously
" accept me for the sake of my Crucified
" Saviour, whose Death I now most
" thankfully commemorate, and who is
" here offered unto thee as our Atone-
" ment, on this Table.

Or shorter, thus:

" O Blessed *Jesus*, who diedst for my
" sake, and daily still renewest thy
" Kindness, by shewing thy self well-
" pleased with what thou hast done, and
" calling me to meet thee in this joyful
" Commemoration of it: I come at thy
" Command, to shew my self humbly and
" thankfully mindful of so Infinite a Be-
" nefit. Blessed, yea for ever Blessed be
" thy Love, which made thee think upon
" when I lay in misery; nay, forget thy
" self, and throw away thy own Life, to

" save

"ſave mine. I humbly adore thy mar-
"vellous Goodneſs, which ſhall ever be
"the Joy and Praiſe, the Wonder and
"Aſtoniſhment of Men and Angels. And
"O that I may always love thee better
"than I do my Life, that ſo I may not
"flinch even to die for thee, as thou haſt
"done for me, if ever thou ſhalt call me
"to it for thy Glory! I ſee in this Bread
"that is broken, and this Wine which is
"poured out, what cruel Pains my Sins
"brought to my deareſt
† *Here name Particulars.* "Lord, † and how they
"ſtand guilty of his Bo-
"dy and Blood. I come
"with ſhame and a troubled Heart to
"confeſs it; I utterly abhor them for
"what they have done, and declare,
"ſince they have proved thy cruel Ene-
"mies, they ſhall evermore be mine, and
"that I will never from this day admit
"of a Reconciliation. I am here to aſ-
"ſure thee, that I will not live unto my
"ſelf or them, but unto thee, and freely
"devote all I have to thy uſe, ſince thou
"haſt bought me. I love all Men, and
"will embrace them as my Brethren, be-
"cauſe they are thine; and freely for-
"give all the World, even as I deſire to
"be forgiven. O Holy *Jeſus*, according
"to thy boundleſs Mercy accept of theſe
"ſmall

"ſmall returns of thy poor Servant, "which though very mean, alas! are "yet the beſt I have to offer thee, and "ſupply me with a more abundant mea- "ſure of thy Grace, that I may be able "to pay back ſomething more worthy of "thee. Let this Holy Sacrament be the "Comfort and Refreſhment of my Heart, "conveying Pardon and Peace to it, and "the Enriching and Eſtabliſhing of "my Spirit with all the Benefits of thy "Blood: make it a great increaſe of pre- "ſent Grace to me, and a certain pledge "of Immortality, to aſſure me that I ſhall "even live with thee, and be near to "that Heart which Dyed for me. Be it "even ſo for thine own ſake, Bleſſed "Jeſu! *Amen.*

In theſe, or ſuch like words, may we act over all thoſe Virtues which are to render us worthy Communicants, before the *Holy Myſteries* are brought to us. And at the *receipt* of them, we may lift up our Hearts to God in theſe or the like Expreſſions.

After the *Receiving of the Bread*, we may ſay to our Deareſt Lord with an Affectionate Heart.

"I Receive this, O! my Lord, in remem-
"brance of thy Death, and thank
"thee most intirely for laying down
"thine own Life for me. O! how I
"rejoyce in thy marvellous Love,
"and in this Remembrance of it!
"I will always live to thee, and utterly
"renounce every sin whereby I have most
"ungratefully pierced thy bleeding
"Heart, and am Friends with all the
"World for thy sake, and will extol
"thy matchless Bounty whilst I have a
"Tongue to speak, giving all Honour,
"Glory, and Praise to thee the Lamb of
"God, who wast slain, and now sittest
"upon the Throne for evermore.

And in like manner after the *receiving of the Cup.*

"THe Remembrance of thy Blood-
"shedding, O! sweetest Saviour,
"is dear to me; I can never forget it,
"since it was altogether for my sake, and
"I owe my very Life to it. In all the
"Affection of an infinitely obliged heart
"I humbly thank thee for what thou hast
"done, and gladly consent to those
"Terms of Life and Mercy which were
"purchased by it, and will never will-
"fully

"fully yield to do any thing that is unwor-
"thy of so great a Benefit, and embrace
"all my Brethren with open Arms, since
"thou so requirest it, and desire after
"this sort to fulfill thy will in all things,
"and adore thy Glorious Goodness,
"and shew forth thy boundless Praise to
"my Lifes end.

"O! keep me unalterable in this
"mind, *may a Devout Soul then go on,*
"and never suffer my own Corrupt Lusts
"to turn me from it. I have now, O!
"Holy Saviour, taken thee into my
"Heart. O let thy Presence banish them
"away, that they may never pretend to
"it again, since now 'tis Holy to the
"Lord, nor ever appear to pollute that
"place wherein so Divine a Guest is
"lodged. Now thou art pleas'd to en-
"ter under my Roof, have me always in
"thy keeping, for I am safe in no other
"hands. Preserve the place thou hast ta-
"ken possession of, and let not thy Enemies
"and mine any more invade it. Pour
"into my Heart all the Benefits of thy
"Crucified Body and Blood, since now
"by thy wonderful Grace I am made
"Partaker of them. Thy Blood was
"shed for the Remission of sins: O! let
"me know and feel that mine are all for-
"given. It obtained the Assistance of

"thy Spirit and Grace; O! let me e-
"ver enjoy that as I stand in need of it!
"It was the Price thou payedst down for
"Eternal Life; O! let that finally be
"my Lot, since thou hast paid so dear for
"it! Bid me hope assuredly, O Blessed
"Jesu! that all this shall be made good
"unto thy Servant, because now thou
"hast given thy self to me, and fed me
"with thine own Body, whereby mayest
"thou ever dwell in me, and I in thee.
Amen.

And when this is done, whilst others are receiving, we may employ our selves in some of the *foregoing Devotions*; or, when we have enough of them, joyn heartily in the *Prayer* which is made at the Delivery of the Bread and Wine to *others*; or strike in affectionately with the *Psalm of Praise*, which for the ease and exercise of all, but of those particularly who have already received, is wont at that time to be sung in most Places.

After this sort then may we lift up our Hearts to God, and discharge all those Duties which are required in every worthy Communicant. When we have no other helps, we may acceptably express them all in a Devout Concurrence with

with the *Churches Prayers*; since in them, as I have † shewn, there is an actual exercise of all these Duties. But when we can do more, either by the help of *Books* or our own *invention*; we may act them over still more fully in *these* or such *like* forms of Devotion.

† *Part* 1. *Chap.* 3.

And when all this is done, and this solemn Feast is concluded, we must not think the work of *worthy Receiving* is at an end; for *one* thing still remains that must employ us always *afterwards*, and that is a *careful performance of all those Promises which we made to God in this Holy Ordinance.*

In the Sacrament, as has been shew'd, we seek not only a Pardon for what is *past*, but also vow and promise Amendment for the *Future*, and these Promises must be made good afterwards, and it must be our care whilst we Live to fulfil them.

This we are *highly concerned to do*, and it will greatly increase our Guilt and Condemnation if we fall short of it. For if we return to our former sins again, after we have thus solemnly vow'd to forsake them: We are false to our Word, and treacherous where we seem to be most sincere, and seek more especially to

be truſted. We break our Faith with God, and go about to delude his Expectation, had he been capable to be impoſed upon and believed as we would have had him: which is as great an abuſe as we can well put upon him. And this *doubles* the ſin which we commit, and ſets God further off from being intreated; for now we have not only the *Fault it ſelf* to anſwer for, but alſo this *Perfidionſneſs*, and *breach of Vows*, which adds a new one to it, and makes it greater. So that after every Sacrament, if we ſtill continue Impenitent, our Guilt is aggravated, and our Souls more endanger'd, and we are greater ſinners than we were before.

Thus highly are we concerned to perform the Promiſes which we made at the Table of our Lord.

And this we ſhall be *very like to do*, if we *think often of them every day*, for ſome time eſpecially, *after we are gone from it*. Indeed, if we forget all we did, and all the Vows we made there to Almighty God; we are like to be the ſame men ſtill, and muſt not expect that it ſhould amend us. For the Sacrament, as I have ſhewn, doth not better us without our own Care, but by helping and ingaging us to Good endeavours after it is over. It works not as a *Natural*, but as a *Moral*

ral means, and improves none but ſuch as remember what they did thereat, and labour after their own Improvements. So that if we think all our work was done at Church, and fall into a careleſs and ſecure ſtate of mind when we get home again; we ſhall be held ſtill in the ſame ſins, and the matter is not like to be much mended with us by ſuch Receiving. But if afterwards we frequently remember what we promiſed there; if we ſet our own Vows every day before our Eyes, and call to mind our own ingagements; that remembrance will give them Force, and make them have their effect upon us. For the thought of our having *promiſed*, and *ſolemnly undertook* for any Duties, is the readieſt way to have them all *performed*.

To reap that Benefit then which God deſign'd, and which we expect by it; we muſt dwell much in our own Thoughts upon what paſſed there after the Feaſt is ended. We muſt maintain that Acquaintance with our Bleſſed Lord which then we begun, and look upon it, not as a *tranſient Act*, but as an *entrance on a laſting State*, which ever after we are to continue in. We muſt bethink our ſelves daily, that when laſt we were with our Saviour, we cut out work for our

whole Lives, and in that hour made many Promiſes, which through all the remainder of our days are moſt Religiouſly to be performed by us. This courſe will render it an Ordinance full of Grace and Heavenly Benefits, which will ſet us on mightily in our virtuous Attainments. And when we reap this profit by it, it will cure all our Indifferency and Averſation to it, and make us run to it the next time with edge of Appetite, as we would to a moſt delicious and enlivening entertainment. We ſhall no more account it a fruitleſs work, when once we have taſted theſe ſweet and wholeſome effects of it; but deſire to ſhare in it oftner as it can be had, and bleſs the time that ever we came thereto.

The End.

Heads

HEADS OF SELF-EXAMINATION, FOR

The Use of those who would find out what Sins they have to Repent of, either before a *Sacrament*, or at any *other* Times.

The Particulars of Duty *towards* God *and* Men, *as they are briefly summ'd up in the* Church-Catechism.

MY Duty toward *God* is, to *Believe in him, i. e.* to believe the Scriptures, which are his Word, taking all the Laws of Humility, Charity, *&c.* there recited, for his Laws; and the Promises of Pardon and Happiness to the Penitent, *&c.* and the Threatnings of

Eternal Death to all impenitent Sinners, *&c.* for his Promiſes and Threatnings, which he will ſee fulfilled upon us: To *Fear him*, as every Man doth, who dare not do any Evil thing which he ſees is offenſive to him: To *Love him with all my heart, &c.* as thoſe Perſons do, who for his ſake do every thing which he bids them: To *Worſhip him*, to *give him Thanks*, to *put my whole Truſt in him*, *i. e.* both in his Providence, for outward Supplies, as I need them; in his Mercy, for Pardon of Sins, when I repent of them; and in his Spirit, for Grace and inward Aid, when I endeavour together with him: To *Call upon him*, to *Honour his Holy Name and his Word*, and to *Serve him truly all the days of my Life.*

My Duty towards my *Neighbour* is, to *Love him as my ſelf*, or to *do to all Men as I would have them do to me*: To *Love*, *Honour*, *and*, when need is, *Succour my Father and Mother*: To *Honour* and *Obey the King*, and *all that are put in Authority under him*: To *ſubmit my ſelf to all my Spiritual Paſtors*, and *all my Governours*: To *ſhew Reverence to all my Betters*: To *bear no Malice or Hatred in my Heart*: To *hurt no body by Word* or *Deed*: To *be True and Juſt in all my Dealings*: To *keep my Hands from Picking* and *Stealing*,

and

and *my Tongue from Evil-speaking, Lying,* and *Slandering*: To *keep my Body in Temperance, Soberness,* and *Chastity*: *Not to covet other Mens Goods*: To *be Diligent in my own Calling,* and *do my Duty in that Relation, State,* or *way of Life, unto which it has pleas'd God to call me.*

A Particular Enumeration of Sins, whether against God, *our* Neighbour, *or our* selves; *taken out of the* Measures of Christian Obedience, *which are all there explained in the Second Book.*

SIns against our *selves* are *Pride, i. e.* too high a Conceit of our selves, and Contempt of others: *Arrogance, i. e.* Assuming too much to our selves, in setting off our own Praise: *Vain-glory, i. e.* Intemperate Affectation of the Praise of others: *Ambition, i. e.* A restless Pursuit of Honour and Great Places: *Haughtiness,* in contemptuous, scornful Carriage: *Imperiousness, i. e.* A Lordly way of Behaviour, in commanding Men no way subject to us: *Worldliness, i. e.* An over-eager Care of Worldly things: *Gluttony,*

tony, *Voluptuousness*, *Drunkenness*, *Revelling*, *Incontinence*, *Lasciviousness*, *Filthy* or *Obscene Jestings*, *Uncleanness*, *Sodomy*, *Effeminateness*, *Adultery*, *Fornication*, *Incest*, *Rape*, *Covetousness*, *i. e.* Unsatisfiedness with our own, and an impatient Desire of more, or of what belongs to others: *Refusing the Cross*, *i. e.* Deserting a Duty to avoid it: *Idleness*, *Sensuality*, *i. e.* An industrious Care to gratifie our Bodily Senses: *Carnality*, *i. e.* Subjection to our Fleshly Lusts and Appetites.

Sins against *God* are, *Atheism*, *Denying Providence*, *Blasphemy*, *Superstition*, *Idolatry*, *Witchcraft*, *Foolishness*, or gross Ignorance of our Duty, *Unbelief*, *Hating God*, *Want of Zeal*, *Distrusting him*, *Not praying to him*, *Unthankfulness*, *Discontent in our present Condition*, or *Repining at his Ordering*, *Fearlessness*, or Venturing on any thing, tho' we know it will offend him; *Common Swearing*, *Perjury*, *Prophaneness*, *Disobedience*.

Sins against *our Brethren* at *large*, where are Sins of

Injustice; as, *Murder*, *False-witness*, *Slander*, *i. e.* Defaming them with False things: *Lying*, *Unfaithfulness*, or Breach of Promise; *Theft*, *Oppression*, *i. e.* Wronging one who cannot cope with us in Contention: *Extortion*, or *Depressing in Bargaining*:

Bargaining: *Circumvention*, or going beyond our Brethren.

Uncharitableneſs; as, *Wickedneſs*, *i. e.* A Delight in doing Miſchief, and making others Work: *Deſpiſing* and *hating them that are Good*, *Giving Scandal to Weak Brethren*, *i. e.* Laying in their way an Occaſion of Sin: *Envy*, *Rejoycing in Evil*, *Uncharitableneſs in Alms*, *Suffering falſe Stains to ſtick upon them*, when 'tis in our power to vindicate them: *Evil-ſpeaking*, or Divulging any Ill we hear or know by them: *Cenſoriouſneſs*, *i. e.* A proneneſs to Blame or Condemn them: *Back-biting*, *Whiſpering*, *Railing*, *Upbraiding* them with our Kindneſſes, *Reproaching* them with their own Faults, *Mocking* them for their Infirmities, *Difficulty of Acceſs*, *Affronting* them, *Uncourteouſneſs*, *Uncondeſcention*, *Unhoſpitableneſs* towards Strangers, *Surlineſs*, *Malignity*, or putting the worſt Senſe on what is ſaid or done by others: *Unquietneſs*, *Unthankfulneſs*, *Anger*, *Variance*, *Bitterneſs*, *Clamour*, *Hatred* and *Malice*; *Implacableneſs*, or Difficulty in being appeaſed after any Offences: *Revenge*, or Returning Ill for Ill: *Curſing Enemies*, *Haſtineſs* and *Rigour* in exacting Puniſhments.

Diſcord; as, *Unpeaceableneſs*, *Emulation*, or Provoking one another: *Pragmaticalneſs*,

ticalneſs, or being *Buſie-Bodies*: *Talebearing*, *Not ſatisfying for Injuries*, *Contentiouſneſs*, *Diviſion* and *Faction*, *Hereſie*, *Schiſm*, *Tumult*.

Sins againſt our *Brethren* in *Particular Relations*.

Sins againſt *Sovereign Princes*; as *Diſhonour*, *Irreverence*, *Speaking Evil of Dignities*, *Refuſing Tribute* and *Taxes*, *Traiterouſneſs*, *Neglecting to pray for Kings*, *Diſobedience* to them, *Reſiſtance* and *Rebellion*.

Sins againſt *Biſhops* and *Miniſters*; as, *Diſhonour* of them, eſpecially for their *Works* ſake: *Irreverence*, *Not providing for them*, *Sacrilege*, or taking away either by Force or Fraud thoſe Juſt Dues which are given to God for their Support: *Not Praying for them*, *Diſobedience*.

Sins of *Married* Perſons; as, *Unconcernedneſs in each others Condition*, *Not bearing each others Infirmities*, *Provoking each other*, *Eſtrangedneſs*, *Publiſhing each others Faults*, *Not praying for each other*, *Jealouſie*. Of the *Husband* againſt the *Wife*; as, *Not maintaining her* with convenient Supplies, *Not protecting her* from outward Annoyances, *Imperiouſneſs*, or a harſh and magiſterial exerciſe of Commands: *Uncompliance* with her Reaſonable Deſires, and *Uncondeſcention* to her Pitiable Weaknesſes.

neſſes. Of the *Wife* againſt the *Husband*; as, *Diſhonour* in inward Eſteem and Opinions, *Irreverence* in outward Carriage, *Unobſervance* in not forecaſting to do what may pleaſe him, *Diſobedience* to his juſt Commands, *Caſting off his Yoke*, or Unſubjection.

Sins of *Parents* and *Children*; as, *Want of Natural Affection*, *Not praying for each other*, *Imprecation*. Of the *Parents* againſt the *Children*; as, *Not providing* for them, *Irreligious* and *Evil Education*, *Provoking them to Anger* by Imperious Harſhneſs, and needleſs Severity in Governing. Of the *Children* againſt the *Parents*; as, *Diſhonour* in their Minds, *Irreverence* in their Behaviour, *Being aſhamed* of them, *Mocking* them, *Speaking Evil* of them, *Stealing* from them, *Diſobedience* to their Lawful Commands, *Contumacy*, or *Caſting off Subjection* to them.

Sins of *Brothers* and *Siſters*; as, *Want of Natural Affection*, *Not providing for our Brethren*, *Not praying for* them, *Praying againſt* them.

Sins of *Maſters* againſt their *Servants*; as, *Not maintaining* them, *Not Catechiſing* or *Inſtructing* them, *Unequal Government*, or *Injuſtice* ſhewn in requiring Unlawful, *Wantonneſs* in requiring Superfluous, and *Rigour* in requiring Unmerciful things of them:

them: *Immoderate Threatning*, *Imperiousness*, or Contemptuous, haughty treating of them: *Defrauding*, or *keeping back the Wages of the Hireling*. Of *Servants* against their *Masters*; as, *Dishonour*, *Irreverence*, *Publishing* or *aggravating their Master's Faults*, *Not clearing*, when they can, his *injured Reputation*, *Unfaithfulness* in what he intrusts with them, shewn either by their *Wastefulness*, *i. e.* Spending it for their Pleasure; or *Purloyning*, *i. e.* Diverting it to their own Profit and secret Enrichment: *Disobedience*, *Non-observance*, *Answering again*, *Slothfulness*, *Eye-service*, *Resistance*, *Not praying for* him, *Praying against* him.

To all which, add two other Sins, which are peculiarly so among Christians, *viz.* The *Neglect of Baptism*, and *Absenting from the Lord's Supper*.

When we are desirous to discover all our Sins, that we may truly repent of them, we may examine our own Hearts in all these Particulars, trying our selves either by the *former* Catalogue when we have less, or by this *latter* when we have more Time, according to our own Discretion. We may ask our selves at every one, Whether we ever *wittingly yielded* to it? and if we have, Whether since that

that we have *amended* it? And noting all thoſe whereof we ſtand guilty before God, affect our own Hearts with a ſorrowful ſenſe of what we have done, from ſuch Conſiderations as are before laid down; and then renew our Vows, and make God our humble Confeſſion, and Engagements that we will never have more to do with them. For which end, they who are not otherwiſe ſupplied, may make uſe of the *Devotion p.* 448, which may ſerve as a *Penitential Prayer* and *Confeſſion.*

A PRAYER Before the SACRAMENT.

O Father of Mercies, who hast once given thy Son to die for me, and art now ready in the Holy Sacrament to offer him to me again; I humbly adore, but am utterly at a loss when I would duely prize so invaluable a Mercy. What am I, poor wretched Creature, that I should sit down to eat with my Blessed Lord, when the Glorious Angels at a distance adore and pay him Homage? Why should I be call'd to feed upon his Sacred Body and Blood, when my Sins had a hand in all he suffered, so that I deserve to be ranked among his Murderers, who were guilty of that horrid Fact, which nothing but the Blood they shed

ſhed could ever expiate? But ſince it is thy Glorious Excellency, O Bleſſed Jeſu! *to love thoſe that hate thee, and to ſave their Lives who barbarouſly took away thine, and accordingly to call to this Heavenly Feaſt ſo unworthy a Wretch as I am; I am ready to come at thy Command, but would fain come Worthily, and leave all my Sins behind me, ſeeing it is no Feaſt for them. Oh! I loath them, and would never yield to commit them, were they to do again; and humbly intreat my Heavenly Father, that for thy ſake he would freely forgive me what is paſt, and rid me of them for the time to come. Slay them, Good Lord, for they have ſlain thee, and will ſlay mee too in time, if they are ſuffer'd to reign in me. Meet me in this Heavenly Banquet with a full Pardon of all mine Offences, and a perfect Cure of all mine Infirmities, that I may be cleanſed by thy Blood, and quickned by thy Spirit, and aſſured of that Eternal Life which for thy ſake God has promiſed to all his Elect ones.*

All

All this thou art ready to do for me, if I come worthily; and therefore my humble Requeſt is, That thou wouldſt aſſiſt me acceptably to perform the Duties of this Feaſt, that ſo I may enjoy all the Bleſſings of it, and feel it a Communion of thy very Body and Blood. I would gladly remember thy Dying Love with the moſt Devout Affections, with a Heart that is full of Thanks, and intirely devoted to thy Service, and quite weary of my Sins, and moſt deſirous of thy Grace, and throughly prepared to ſeal a laſting Covenant of Repentance and Reconciliation with thee and all my Neighbours. All this I deſire to do, and to do it fervently: But, alas! I cannot do it as I ought, unleſs thou wilt graciouſly come and help me. My Apprehenſions of this amazing Love are very low; O do thou exalt them. My Heart is ſtill inſenſible of what thou haſt done for me, and my Affections dull and heavy; O do thou quicken and inflame them. Make me love thee as much as thou deſerveſt, and deſire thy Grace as highly

ly as I need it, and be ſet againſt every Sin as irreconcileably as there is cauſe for it, and love all my Brethren as I am beloved, that I may be fit to receive the abundant Communications of thy Grace in the approaching Sacrament. I earneſtly ask, and humbly hope for all this, O Good God, only becauſe I infinitely need it; and thy Grace is Infinite, which will not ſuffer thee to ſee the Neceſſities of thy poor Servant unſupplied; and unworthy as I am, I am ſtill the Purchaſe of thy Sons Blood: O then do not deſpiſe me for thine own Mercies, and thy Sons ſake; in whoſe Holy Name and Words I further pray as he hath taught me.

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

A
Prayer and Thankſgiving
After the
SACRAMENT.

I Thank thee moſt intirely, O! my God, for calling me this day to thy own Table, to ſhew me how thine only Son freely dyed in my ſtead, and to aſſure me that now for his ſake thou art fully Reconciled, and wilt live in me by thy Grace now at preſent, and raiſe me up to be Eternally happy with thy Self at laſt; of all which thou haſt given me the ſureſt Pledges in his precious Body and Blood. What can I render to thee, Holy Father, or to thee my deareſt Saviour, for ſo incomprehenſible a Beneſit? I admire thy marvellous Love, and magnify it above all things. Thy Praiſe ſhall ever be in my Mouth, and

and I will tell out thy wondrous works with Gladneſs. And may all Hearts adore, and every Tongue confeſs that thou, Holy Jeſus, *art the Saviour of the World, and the Son of the Father, whom Heaven and Earth muſt Honour, and call Bleſſed for evermore.*

Pardon, O! Good God, the unaffectedneſs of my dull Heart, in the receipt of ſo ineſtimable a Treaſure; and fill me with Deſires ſome way ſuitable to my needs, and the richneſs of thy Mercies, that whenever this Cup of Bleſſings ſhall again over-flow, my Heart may run over with Joy and Thankfulneſs alſo. Let me never forget the Love I have received, and the Peace I have Seal'd, and the Promiſes of New Life I have made this Day; but as thy Grace has help'd me to them, ſo keep me in a lively ſenſe of them, and inable me always to fulfill the ſame to my Lives end. Now thou haſt given me the Blood of Expiation to ſhew we are Friends; O! never let me be guilty of any thing to

break

break the Peace, which is now so solemnly ratified betwixt us. Now I have vow'd Obedience to thy Laws, to be Humble, Chast, Temperate, Just, Charitable, Patient, Devout, * and entirely resign'd to thy Will and Pleasure; O! let me not start back again from these Holy Promises for ever! Now I have received my Blessed Lord, never suffer me to do any thing unworthy of him; now I am Partaker of his Body and Blood, let his Holy Spirit go along with them, and then I shall be what I ought when I am in his keeping. My sins, which I have renounced, will return again, except he chase them away; and my false Heart, which now seems fixt for God, will revolt, unless he establish it. O! Sweetest Saviour, let thy Body be my Food, thy Strength my Guard, thy Spirit my Life, and the sense of thy Favour my greatest Joy and Comfort. Go on Graciously to accomplish what thou hast now begun in me, and let me ever be secure

* Here mention Virtues particularly Vow'd at the Lords Table.

ſecure and happy in thy Cuſtody. Be it even ſo, for thine own ſake, Bleſſed Jeſu!

And then, where there is time for it, or afterwards, where there is not, may they go on, and ſay.

Give thy Grace, O Holy Jeſu! *to all the World, and let all who were Redeemed by thy Blood acknowledge thee to be the Lord, and become thy Worſhippers and Faithful Servants. Make all Chriſtians Conſcientious Practiſers of that Holineſs which they profeſs; and above all, inſpire them with uniting Principles and charitable Hearts, that by their loving one another, as thou haſt loved us, all the World may know they are thy Diſciples. Let all Governours Rule with Wiſdom and Juſtice, and Subjects obey with Love and Chearfulneſs: Let the Prieſts of the Lord be Exemplary in their Lives, and Diſcreet and Diligent in their Labours, having a moſt compaſſionate Love for Souls; and let the People be Humble and Towardly, moſt deſirous to hearken, and fully bent to follow wiſe Inſtructions. Be*

a help at hand to all that need and are afflicted. Send supplies to all that are in want, and assist them contentedly to depend upon thee. Raise Friends to the Widow and Fatherless, the Prisoners and Captives, and all that groan under Oppressors, who are thrown upon thy Mercy. Give Repentance, Patience, and Resignation to all that are sick, and Ease when thou seest it convenient for them. Be a Comforter to all troubled Consciences, helping them to an acceptable Holiness, and enlightning their minds about all causeless Scruples, that they may not fear where no Fear is. Succour all that are tempted, with such a measure of thy Grace, as may inable them to stand in all their Tryals. Think particularly on all my Friends, who are especially indeared to me by their Kindnesses or Acquaintance; on all my Relations in the Flesh; on all that Pray particularly for me, or desire my Prayers. Teach us all to desire what thou approvest, and then grant us whatsoever is desired: Prevent us in all our Actions,

ons, and Guard us againſt all Dangers, and Relieve us in all Straights, and grant that we may always make thee our Stay and Confidence, and take all things well which thou ordereſt for us. Shorten all our Sorrows, and prevent all our Sins, and fit us all for that Eternal Kingdom which thou haſt prepared for us, for Jeſus's ſake, in whoſe Holy Name and Words I further pray unto thee.

Our Father, &c.

Being ſenſible how plain minds, who are ready to do it ſo far as they are inabled, are oft-times at a Loſs for their *Daily Devotions*; and not knowing but this Treatiſe may fall into ſome ſuch Hands; I have added *two* Prayers, which ſuch Perſons may ſay *Morning* and *Evening* in their Families.

A

Morning Prayer

FOR A

FAMILY.

O God, who art the Giver of all good Gifts, and the Father of Mercies; We thine unworthy Servants intirely desire to praise thy Name for all the Expressions of thy Bounty towards us. Blessed be thy Love, that gave thy Son to die for our Sins, to put us in a way of being happy, if we would obey thee; and after all our wilful Refusals of thy Grace, still hast patience with us, and hast added this one Day more to all we have mis-spent already, to see if we will finish the Work thou hast set us to do, and fit our selves for Eternal Glory. Pardon, Good Lord, all our former Sins, and all our Abuses of thy Forbearance, for which now we are sorry at our Hearts;

and

and give us Grace to lead more holy Lives, and be more careful in improving all future Opportunities. Make thy ſelf preſent to our Minds, and let thy Love and Fear rule in our Souls, in all thoſe Places and Companies where our Occaſions ſhall lead us this Day. Keep us Chaſte in all our Thoughts, Temperate in all our Enjoyments, Humble in all our Opinions of our ſelves, Charitable in all our Speeches of others, Meek and Peaceable under all Provocations, Sincere and Faithful in all our Profeſſions, and ſo Juſt and Upright in all our Dealings, that no Neceſſity may force, nor Opportunity in any kind allure us to defraud or go beyond our Neighbours. When thou beſtoweſt Good on others, let not us envy but rejoyce in it; and when thou addeſt any to our ſelves, let us own thy Mercy, and humbly thank thee for it. Afford us convenient Supplies in all our reaſonable Neceſſities, and protect us againſt the approach of all Dangers: make us diligent in all our Buſineſs, and give ſuch Succeſs to

our Endeavours as thou ſeeſt moſt expedient for us; and teach us contentedly to ſubmit, and not to repine at any thing that happens by the Allotment of thy Providence. In all our Paſſage thro' this World, and our manifold Concerns in it, ſuffer not our Hearts to be too much ſet upon it; but always fix our Eye upon the Bleſſed Hope, that as we go along we may make all the Things of this World miniſter to it, and be careful above all things to fit our Souls for that pure and perfect Bliſs, which thou haſt prepared for all that love and fear thee, in the Glories of thy Kingdom.

Extend thy Grace, we further beſeech thee, to all Men, in all Places; eſpecially to the Governours and Subjects, to all both High and Low, Rich and Poor, that pray for it, or need it, in theſe Kingdoms. Bleſs all our Relations who are near us in the Fleſh, and all our Friends and Benefactors who are endeared to us by their Kindneſſes. Forgive all our Enemies, give them Hearts to fear thee, and to be

kind

kind to us. And ſupply all us, and all others, with whatſoever elſe thou ſeeſt proper for us, for Chriſt his ſake; in whoſe Bleſſed Name and Words we ſtill recommend our ſelves unto thee, ſaying,

Our Father, &c.

An Evening Prayer for a FAMILY.

O *Moſt Gracious God, who daily multiplieſt upon us thy Mercies, notwithſtanding we every day renew our Provocations; Accept, we beſeech thee, of our moſt humble and hearty Thanks for thy unſpeakable Kindneſs towards us. Bleſſed be thy Goodneſs, which has this day ſupplied us with Food and Neceſſaries, and preſerved us in Health, the chieſeſt of all outward Enjoyments, and proſper'd the Work of our Hands, and lent us our Friends to be ſtill a Support and Comfort to us. Adored be thy Love and Patience, which haſt allowed us the*

Day

Day more to amend our Ways, and aſſiſted us by the Suggeſtions of thy Spirit, and thy gracious Providences, to make up that Reſignation, Humility, Contentedneſs, Chaſtity, Sobriety, Meekneſs, Charity, and other Virtues, which are yet wanting in our own Souls. We deſire to ſhew our ſelves duely ſenſible of theſe endearing Benefits, by learning to depend upon thy Providence, which has been ſo watchful over us; and to be contented with thy Orderings, which are ſo wiſely fitted to our own Advantage; and applying all Opportunities to the increaſe of that Righteouſneſs and Holy Living which thou requireſt at our Hands. We fain would do it, and are here ſincerely reſolved to endeavour it; and thou haſt promiſed to aid all thoſe who labour in ſo good a Work: Be it then, O Lord, unto thy Servants according to thy Word, and enable us by thy Grace and Holy Spirit ſo to do.

We are ſenſible, O God, how highly we have offended thee, altho' we ſtand thus indebted for all we have or hope

to

to enjoy, to thy Bounty. How many ways have we diſhonour'd our Profeſſion, and revolted from the Vows we made in Baptiſm, by Pride, and Envy, and Anger, and Diſcontent, and Evil-ſpeaking, and ſerving divers Luſts, which then we utterly renounced, and promiſed never to live in again? We are heartily grieved and aſhamed for theſe and all other our Miſdoings, and are fully reſolv'd by thy Grace hereafter to amend them: We unfeignedly repent of them, and for Chriſt's ſake humbly beg to be forgiven, and that thy Grace and Holy Spirit may rid us of them for the time to come. Our full purpoſe is to endeavour it, and thy Promiſe is to help us in it: O let thine Arm be our Almighty Aid, and then we ſhall return to them no more.

Keep us in thy good Providence this Night, make our Sleep ſafe and refreſhing to us: Fit us for our great Change, that it may not ſurprize us unawares, but that having led holy Lives, we may be happy in our Deaths, and have Comfort and well-grounded Hope in thee. Give

Give all Men Grace to repent, and become thy Servants. Let all Chriſtians live up to the Laws of that Religion which they profeſs. Eſpecially bleſs theſe Kingdoms wherein we live. Let our Governours Rule with Juſtice, and our People Obey with Chearfulneſs: Make the Rich and Proſperous Temperate in Uſing, and Charitable in Diſtributing of their Subſtance; and the Poor and Afflicted, Patient and Contented under their Burdens: And cauſe us all to love as Brethren, to be Pitiful and Tender-hearted towards all Men. Preſerve our Friends in their Souls and Bodies; forgive our Enemies, and make them kindly affected towards us; and do whatſoever thou ſeeſt fitting for us all, for the ſake of thy Son, our Advocate, Jeſus Chriſt, *who has taught us in his own Words thus to pray.*

Our Father, &c.

FINIS.

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